

December 1916

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The QUIVER

CHRISTMAS
NUMBER

WITH 4 BEAUTIFUL
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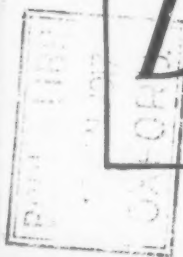
SEE YOURSELF



the benefit

Beecham's Pills

will do for you.



Per 1419 d 95



*Half a Guinea will buy
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A really dependable razor at a popular price. It opens flat, and can be stropped without removing the blade. This construction also overcomes the difficulty of cleaning, which is the bugbear of so many safety razors.

Strongly made, heavily silvered, and with blades that cannot be surpassed, it is used by many men who could afford a far more expensive razor, but prefer the simple efficiency of the "7 o'clock."

"7 O'CLOCK" STANDARD SET.

Consists of heavily silver-plated stropping razor, six finest lancet steel blades, in compact blade sheath, special strop in hinged partition as part of the case—the whole in handsome case measuring only 5 in. by 2 in. by 1½ in. deep. **10/6**

ON SALE OF HIGH-CLASS DEALERS THROUGHOUT THE WORLD.

THE PROPRIETORS OF THE "7 O'CLOCK" SAFETY RAZOR, 61, NEW OXFORD STREET, LONDON, W.C.

Are You Doing Your Bit?

That work of national importance you are doing requires you to keep fit and well. Do you tackle it as you would a great game? Do you feel that delicious glow of health which makes life worth living, and helps you to laugh away all worries and trials?

Or is the work a burden? Are you tired of it all—out of sorts—out of temper—full of headaches—lazy—in low spirits—with no appetite?

You must feel well and be well

if you are to do the best possible for yourself and for the Nation. And what is equally important, you must keep the children strong and healthy. Yours should be a happy home if you seek the help of

THE PEOPLE'S PHYSICIAN

The People's Physician does not displace the doctor in serious illness, but it enables you to avoid illness—to nip disease in the bud—to treat that simple burn or hurt which might so easily develop into blood-poisoning. It tells you what you need to know about—

Your own body.
How to keep fit.
How to exercise.
Diets in health.
Diets in disease.
Diets for athletics.

The Children—
Their troubles.
Curing their diseases.
Feeding them.
The need for cleanliness.
The care of teeth.

First aid.
Fractures.
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Shock.

Nursing.
The Sick Room.
Colds.
Headaches.
Indigestion.
Chilblains.

and a host of other subjects all affecting you as an individual or as the head of a family. It is in short—

A Book of Health for Everybody

FREE BOOKLET COUPON

THE WAVERLEY BOOK Co., Ltd.,
7 Old Bailey, London, E.C.

Please send me free of charge your Illustrated Booklet on "The People's Physician," with full particulars of your special offer.

Name

Occupation

Address

Q.E. 191

FREE

Send now for the Free Illustrated Booklet. It tells you all about this great household book, and how you can obtain it for a first payment of only

2/6

The Waverley Book Co., Ltd.,
7 Old Bailey, London, E.C.

A Money-Saving and Money-Making Book

for every Household

The Amateur Mechanic

A Practical Guide to the Making, Repairing, Altering, Adapting, Expert Cleaning and Adjusting of everything in the Home, in the Shop, in the Office and Warehouse

With hundreds of photographs and helpful pictures showing exactly "How To Do It"

THIS IS WHAT YOU WANT TO KNOW

How to Make a Mattress—How to Make a Pair of Hand-sewn Boots—How to Repair Boots and Shoes—How to Make a Pair of Riveted Boots—How to Distemper Ceilings and Walls—How to Make and Fix Curtain Fittings—How to Frame Pictures and Fit them—To Make and Repair Locks—Simple Bricklaying—To do French Polishing—To Build a Sailing-boat—To Fit a Hearth with Tiles—To Tile a Wall—To Design and Construct Summer-Houses of every kind—To Repair Arm-Chairs—To Upholster Chairs, Sofas, etc.—To Make and Fit Roller-Blinds—To Make and Fix Lath-rolling Blinds (for Green-houses)—To Make a Hot-water Towel Rail—To do Beautiful Inlaid Woodwork—To Ebonise Oak-wood—To Cure Dry Rot in Floors—To Make and Repair Step-Ladders—To Use Chisels, Drilling-Machines, Metal Drilling Instruments, etc.—To Lay a Concrete Floor—To Slate a Roof—To Lime-white a Poultry House—To Make and to Repair a Barometer—To Make Tickets and to Write Signs—To Install a Telephone at Home—To do every kind of simple Woodworking—Also elaborate Woodwork—To Make a Magic-Lantern—To Make an Angle Wardrobe—To Cut Stencils—To Install Wireless Telegraphy—To Fix and Repair Stoves and Ranges—To Repair and Adjust Sewing-Machines—To Repair Pianos—To Stuff and Set-up Birds, etc.—To Fix an Anthracite Stove—To Clean and Repair a Mod. rn Watch—To Repair Gas Pipes and Gas Burners—To Mend Windows—etc. etc. Hundreds of plain directions. This is money-making and money-saving knowledge, and

This Work Shows You How

Read what the men who have bought and paid for it say of it—

Mr. James Moore (Gloucester) writes: "The work is a splendid example of thoroughness, and a complete self-instructor. It quite bears out all you claim for it."

Mr. E. G. Carp (Pentre, Glam.) writes: "It gives me every satisfaction. I think it should be on every amateur's bookshelf."

Mr. T. G. Riordan (Upper Tooting, London) writes: "With absolutely no knowledge of the trade to guide me, after reading the articles on *Bootmaking*, I was able to make a pair of boots, partly hand-sewn and partly riveted—and to make them well. Since then I have made a very fine pair of ladies' shoes. I consider that nothing I could say about the work could be too much praise."

SEND FOR THE FREE BOOKLET WITHOUT DELAY

GRATIS

An explanatory
Pamphlet—no charge
and no obligation to
order anything

To the Waverley Book Company, Ltd.,
7, 8 and 9 Old Bailey, London, E.C.

Please send me, without charge or obligation to order, your Free Illustrated Pamphlet containing all particulars as to contents, authors, etc., of "The Amateur Mechanic," also information as to your offer to send the Complete Work for a merely nominal first payment, the balance to be paid by a few small monthly payments of half-a-crown, beginning thirty days after delivery of work.

Name

Address

Q.E. 1916

Conquer your Grey Hair

LONDON HAIR SPECIALIST'S DISCOVERY

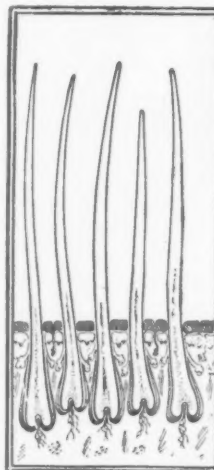
1,000,000 "Back-to-Youth" Gifts

NO man or woman is willingly grey-haired. The great problem that grey-haired people try to solve is how to restore their grey hair to its natural colour. This problem has been solved

by a well-known London Hair Specialist, and in proof of his success he is prepared to let every grey-haired man or woman test this wonderful preparation free of cost.

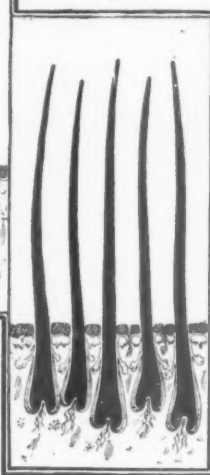
This new preparation is not a dye or stain. The days of deceptive dangerous dyes and stains have passed away. "Astol" is the discovery of Mr. Edwards, who gave to the nation "Harlene Hair-Drill"; and just as he has taught millions of people to practise his wonderful method of growing healthy hair, so to-day he says to every grey-haired man and woman, "You can restore your grey hair to its youthful colour, and commence free of cost."

The action of "Astol" is indeed marvellous. It seems incredible that this colourless liquid, just simply applied to the hair-shafts and roots, can flood the grey-haired shaft with colour, but there is amazing proof positive that if your hair was once brown, black, golden or auburn, and is now grey, apply "Astol" and that original colour will return.



Here, at the right, we see the hair-shafts after "Astol" has reawakened the dormant colour cells and caused them to resume their important work. Note how the colour has been restored from root to tip. Send for your "Astol" outfit to-day.

This diagram at the left shows the condition of the hair shafts when the colour cells, either through worry, age or overwork, have become inactive. They are not dead, however, but only dormant. Look at the diagram on the other side.



London, W.C. Carriage Cheques and P.O.'s should be crossed.

POST THIS GIFT FORM

Fill in and post to EDWARDS' HARLENE Ltd.,
20-22-24-26 Lamb's Conduit Street, London, W.C.

Dear Sirs,—Please send me a Free Trial Supply of "Astol" and packet of "Cremex" Shampoo Powder, with full particulars how I may restore my grey hair to its former colour. I enclose 1d. stamps for postage to any part of the world (Foreign stamps accepted.)

NAME

ADDRESS

Quiver, Dec., 1916.





"THANKS! I WOULD LIKE ONE OF

Player's Navy Cut Cigarettes

"Beautifully Cool and Sweet Smoking."

PLAYERS GOLD LEAF NAVY CUT CIGARETTES.

In tins of 100 - - 3/8

In tins of 50 - - 1/10

PLAYER'S MEDIUM NAVY CUT CIGARETTES.

In card boxes of 100 - 3/-

In card boxes of 50 - 1/7

Smaller Packings at proportionate prices.

For distribution to wounded British Soldiers and Sailors in Military Hospitals at home and for the Front at DUTY FREE RATES.

Terms on application to

JOHN PLAYER & SONS, NOTTINGHAM.



14/6

12/6

... GIVE ...

"SWAN"

FOUNTAINS

this Christmas

It is a compliment to give a "Swan," because it is the best pen; it is useful, appreciable, and lasting. The "Swan" is needed by the soldier, the sailor, and the nurse on Active Service. It is most acceptable to men and women "carrying on" in business, and to the professional man, the student, and the schoolboy. The "Swan" is easy to buy, easy to pack, and easy to send.

Safety Pattern
with screw-on Cap
May be carried in any position
From 12/6 up.

Standard Pattern
with slip-on Cap
To be carried in an upright position
From 10/6 up.

MABIE, TODD & Co., Ltd., 79 & 80 High Holborn, London, W.C.
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War Consumption

OWING to pressure of work, Stevens' Consumption Cure has not been advertised for years now, and many old patients have, in consequence, been under the impression that it could no longer be obtained. This is a mistake, for the cure is still being prepared the same as before the war, and although Mr. Stevens is much engaged on military work, tubercular subjects may still get what, to them, is the elixir of life. Many who were hopeless cases of consumption a short time ago are now fighting for their King and country, hale and hearty, and thank Stevens' Consumption Cure for their recoveries. The following are just a round dozen of them; the addresses given are of their homes. Anyone suffering from the disease should write to them direct, and get first-hand evidence that this wretched disease can really be cured, and men, after suffering from it, even in its last stages, fitted for actual war service.

Mr. A. ARMSTRONG, Wilks Hill, Quebec, Durham. Tubercular Spine. He was discharged from the Newcastle Infirmary as a hopeless case, as they could do no more for him. Was cured by Stevens' treatment, and when last heard of a few weeks ago was on active service in France.

Mr. G. E. JAMES, 29 High Oak, Pensnett, Dudley, Staffs, was cured by Stevens' remedy after sanatorium treatment proved a failure. When last heard of was in France with the British Expeditionary Force.

Mr. C. MATTICK, 74 Leahall Road, Leyton, Essex, was made well by the Stevens' Cure after suffering from Consumption, which had affected both throat and lungs. Is now with the Colours.

Mr. P. J. WHETTER, 115 Elder Road, Canton, Cardiff, had diseased lungs, a cough, expectoration, night sweats, and affected throat. After taking Stevens' Consumption Cure was able to go with the Expeditionary Force to France in 1915, and was still serving his King and country when last heard from on August 14th, 1916.

Mr. A. SIBLEY, The Cottage, Harrow Weald Park, Harrow Weald, Middlesex, after suffering from Pulmonary Tuberculosis, was cured by Stevens' treatment, though sanatorium treatment had failed. When last heard of, on July 10th last, he was still in France, having gone through all last winter there without the least sign of any return of his old trouble.

Mr. H. DRUMMOND, 106 George Street, Whiteinch, Glasgow, had been attended by four doctors for consumption of the bowels, without success. This is considered to be a very hopeless condition; still, he was cured by the Stevens' treatment, and when last heard of, on July 11th, was serving with the British Mediterranean Expeditionary Force.

Mr. T. MOTTRAM, 147 Station Road, Hednesford, Staffs, was made well by Stevens' Cure after suffering severely from consumption, with no less than a cupful of expectoration in twenty-four hours, etc. Now serving with the Colours.

Mr. G. W. ROWSELL, 44 Simpson Road, Portsmouth, after suffering from his lungs for thirteen years, was cured by Stevens' treatment, and was, on July 21st, 1916, serving in His Majesty's Navy.

Mr. E. PRATT, 29 Mansfield Street, Foss Islands Road, York, was cured by Stevens' Consumption Cure after Tuberculin, among other so-called remedies, had failed. When last heard from, on July 7th, 1916, was serving with the British Expeditionary Force in France.

Mr. H. BUNCE, 2 Short Street, High Wycombe, Bucks, recovered by the use of Stevens' Cure after the usual remedies had failed to even give relief, and when last heard of, on July 8th, was still keeping quite well, serving with the Colours.

Mr. SIDNEY SKIPWORTH, 7 Ritches Road, Harringay, N., after operation for tubercular glands, in the Tottenham Hospital, without success, appeared to be in a dying condition when commencing Stevens' treatment, was cured seven years ago, and when last heard of, on June 28th, was serving his King and country.

Mr. G. SABIN, who lived at 2 Bestwood Road, Hucknall Torkard, Notts, was suffering from Consumption, bringing up a pint of sputum in the twenty-four hours, throat also affected. This was apparently quite a hopeless case, but after being treated by Stevens' Consumption Cure, he got well enough to pass for active service with the British Expeditionary Force in France, where he has been since May, 1915. When last heard from on October 5th, he had, unfortunately, just arrived home from France wounded.

Yes; a positive cure does exist for the disease, and yet not officially recognised. Full particulars will be gladly sent to anyone applying for same, free of charge. Address, CHAS. H. STEVENS, 204 and 206 Worple Road, Wimbledon, London, S.W.



"Take these and I can promise you that in a week or so you will be feeling as well as I."

For really bad cases of Constipation and the consequent derangement of the nervous system, and digestion—for headaches, biliousness, blotched complexion, and all disorders arising from impure blood, there is nothing like Choccoloids.

Let Choccoloids take the place of the old-fashioned purgatives of the griping, painful sort which are the standbys in every household. Choccoloids are always effective, yet they are never drastic. They are entirely herbal in composition and

assist Nature's function in a thoroughly natural way. Constipation is common enough to affect someone in nearly every family, and is of sufficient importance to warrant speedy and efficient attention in its early stages—therefore take

Choccoloids

REGD.

The Cure for Constipation

The whole of the digestive system, which includes every organ, function and process concerned with the utilisation of foodstuffs, is interdependent and may be likened to a chain—the strength of which is in its weakest link.

The stomach and bowels are at the same time the strongest and the weakest link of the digestive chain. Keep the stomach and bowels in good order and you will regain youthful spirits, strong digestion and the power to "live."

Choccoloids may be purchased from all Chemists, or direct from the makers.

Price, per box containing 60 tablets, usually sufficient to cure the most obstinate case

2/6

SAMPLE BOX 1/3, containing 24 tablets.

Send a Tin to the Front.

Choccoloids at the Front are a boon. They take the place of any lack of natural laxatives (vegetables, etc.), and they can easily be carried about in the pocket. Put a tin in your next parcel.

The Choccoloid Co.,
Dept. M., Stirchley Laboratories, Birmingham.



made in—(?)

Would you have our warships built in foreign dockyards? You would laugh at the very idea.

Yet it is just as absurd to spend money on pens made in foreign factories when you can get the British Onoto.

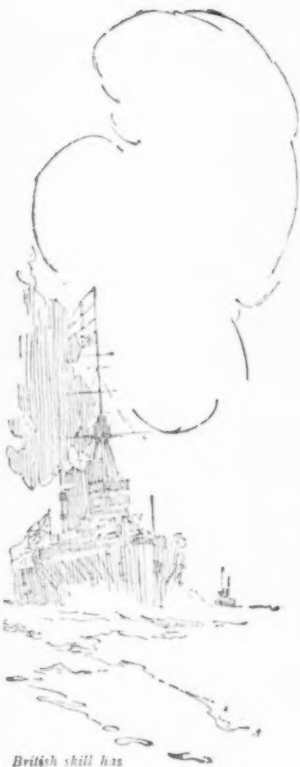
In efficiency, in trustworthiness, in instant readiness for action, the Onoto is as far ahead of foreign pens as our Navy is superior to foreign fleets.

British skill and thoroughness have "made it so."

Foreign pens may cost more. But not one of them combines in itself so many advantages as you find in the Onoto Self-filling Safety. For the Onoto fills itself. It cannot leak. It is instantly ready to write; it never "sweats" ink; you can regulate the ink flow to suit the speed of your handwriting.

When next you are choosing a fountain pen, examine the wording on the holder. Make sure that you are getting a British Onoto, made by De La Rue, London—and not by a hyphenated neutral!

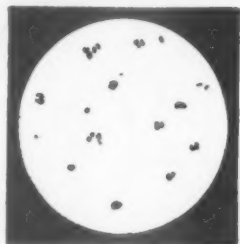
Onoto Self-filling Safety Fountain Pens at all Stationers, etc., from 12/6 upwards. Also Onoto-Valveless, for those who do not want a Self-filling Safety Pen, from 10/6 upwards.



*British skill has
"made it so."*

the British Pen is the Onoto

THOMAS DE LA RUE & CO, LTD., BUNHILL ROW, E.C.



From an actual Micro-photograph of the Diplococcus Pneumoniae—magnified 900 diameters—taken at the Runcorn Laboratories.

How the Pneumonia Bacillus looks under the Microscope.

A deadly organism which may make its attack upon you sooner than you expect. Bacteriologists have determined its habits, classification and mode of attack—with a view to combating it, and scientists are unanimous in recommending as a first precaution the use of

EVANS' Pastilles

The effective precautionary measure against the microbes of influenza, catarrh, diphtheria, pneumonia, etc.

Every man and woman needs these handy, easily-taken Pastilles—not only as a cure for sore throat, catarrh, loss of voice, etc., but also as a sound and definite precaution against the myriads of deadly microbes encountered in the day's work.



Trench Odours: These famous Pastilles are splendid for preventing the unpleasant effects resulting from trench odours, and our soldiers should be kept well supplied.

Warning: See the raised bar.

Genuine Evans' Pastilles can be recognised by the raised bar on each Pastille—which is registered.



Obtainable from all Chemists and Stores, 1/3

Post Free Order a box at once for yourself or your soldier or sailor friend. In case of difficulty write now, enclosing P.O. for 1/3—the Pastilles will be sent direct by return.

EVANS, SONS, LESCHER & WEBB, Ltd., LONDON. LIVERPOOL. NEW YORK.

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A CHEAP

C. E. Brooks.
Dear Sir,—After
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Dear Sir,—I an
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our thanks to you
will do all I can
the greatest ease

A Genuine Rupture Cure Sent on Trial to Prove It.

Don't Wear a Truss Any Longer.

AFTER THIRTY YEARS' EXPERIENCE WE HAVE PRODUCED AN APPLIANCE FOR MEN, WOMEN, AND CHILDREN THAT ACTUALLY CURES RUPTURE.

If you have tried almost everything else come to us. Where others fail is where we have our greatest success. Send attached coupon to-day, and we will send you free our illustrated book on Rupture and its cure, showing the Appliance, and giving you prices and names of many people who have tried it and are extremely grateful. It is instant relief when all others fail. Remember we use no salves, no harness, no lies.

We send on trial to prove what we say is true. You are the judge, and having once seen our illustrated book and read it, you will be as enthusiastic as hundreds of patients whose letters you can also read. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day. It is well worth your time, whether you try our Appliance or not.

TRUSSES WERE NO EARTHLY USE.

High Street, Seel, near Severnside, Kent.
I should like to say that I find great comfort in wearing your Appliance. I never thought I should have been able to take up my occupation as blacksmith again. Trusses were no earthly use to me, and caused me great pain, but now I can go to my work with ease and feel quite safe. I shall always take great pleasure in recommending your wonderful Appliance to those I come in contact with suffering from hernia.
THOS. COLLINGS.

A CHEAP AND INFALLIBLE REMEDY.

69 Oxford Road, Macclesfield.
C. E. Brooks.
Dear Sir—After a year's wearing of your famous Rupture Appliance, I can find no words to express my admiration of such an excellent invention, and the credit I have derived from its use. All you claim for it is true, and all that your clients have said is to be found in their printed testimonials. I can fully bear out and confirm from personal experience. I am over half a century of age, and my Appliance would be instantly ordered if the omniscient surgeon only knew of its existence. For my part, I feel that you owe the universal gratitude of mankind for inventing such a cheap and infallible remedy for so widespread a complaint, and you are perfectly free to make what use you please of what I say in this letter.
Yours faithfully, ELLIN JARRETTE.

PERFECTLY CURED AT 74.

Jubilee Homes, Chalfont St. Giles, Bucks.
Dear Sir—L. Henry Salter, have much pleasure in saying that I am perfectly cured with the Rupture Appliance. You are welcome to use my name where the British flag flies, and all other nations on the face of the globe. Dear Sir I cannot thank you enough for relieving my suffering. I shall recommend you to any of my friends. I am pleased to say it is a permanent cure.
I remain, Yours obediently, HENRY SALTER.
P.S.—My age is 74 years, perfectly cured.

PEOPLE SAY A MIRACLE HAS TAKEN PLACE.

15 Brook Street, Hay, Hereford.
Mr. Brooks.
Dear Sir—I am more than thankful to tell you that, during the five weeks my son has been wearing the Appliance he has had no pain whatever, and is now able to go for walks. On Good Friday he walked out to the country, which is out of the town, where he had not been for twelve years. He also sleeps and eats well, and is altogether a different person. People say a miracle has taken place. We both feel we cannot find words to express our thanks to you for your Appliance. Please use this letter if you wish. I will do all I can to recommend your Appliance wherever possible, as it gives the greatest ease and comfort.
I am, yours very truly (Signed) Nurse M. PARKME.

TEN REASONS WHY

You should Send for the Brooks Rupture Appliance.

1. It is absolutely the only Appliance of the kind on the market to-day, and in it are embodied the principles that inventors have sought after for years.
2. The Appliance for retaining the rupture cannot be thrown out of position.
3. Being an air-cushion of soft rubber, it clings closely to the body, yet never blisters or causes irritation.
4. Unlike the ordinary so-called pads, used in common trusses, it is not cumbersome or ungainly.

5. It is small, soft, and pliable, and positively cannot be detected through the clothing.

6. The soft, pliable bands holding the Appliance do not give one the unpleasant sensation of wearing a harness.

7. There is nothing about it to get foul, and when it becomes soiled it can be washed without injuring it in the least.

8. There are no metal springs in the Appliance to torture one by cutting and bruising the flesh.

9. All the material of which the Appliances are made is of the very best that money can buy, making it a durable and safe Appliance to wear.

10. Our reputation for honesty and fair dealing is so thoroughly established by an experience of over thirty years of dealing with the public, and the prices are so reasonable, the terms so fair, that there certainly should be no hesitancy in sending the free coupon to-day.

8 WEEKS-OLD BABY PERFECTLY CURED.

27 New Street, Littlehills, Staffs.
I now take great pleasure in thanking you for the Appliance, as it has been a perfect cure for my little boy. He was only eight weeks old when I tried the Appliance, and is now perfectly cured at six months. I shall certainly recommend your Appliance as being a perfect cure. Thanking you greatly for what you have done for me,
MRS. SMITH.

REMEMBER

We send the Appliance on trial to prove that what we say is true. You are to be the judge. Fill in the free coupon below and post to-day.

If in London, call at our consulting-rooms. Experienced and capable fitters for ladies and gentlemen.

FREE INFORMATION COUPON.

BROOKS APPLIANCE CO., 63 G BANK BUILDINGS, KINGSWAY, LONDON, W.C.

Please send me by post, in plain wrapper, illustrated book and full information about The Brooks Appliance for the cure of rupture.

NAME.....

ADDRESS.....

(PLEASE WRITE PLAINLY.)



There's no secret— just TATCHO!

It is just as easy for you to possess an abundance of beautiful hair as for the host of ladies who owe their lovely hair to Tatcho.

No need to despair, however thin and poor your hair has become. A friction with Tatcho daily will quickly revive it—restore its “life” and lustre, make it grow.

Just a few drops, well brushed in once daily—that is the whole secret.

Tatcho makes no claim to magical powers. But it does grow hair, and if the testimony of thousands of others does not satisfy you, there is one sure way in which you can be convinced: try it upon your own hair.

TATCHO

the HAIR GROWER

The effect of Tatcho is very soon manifest in the enhanced sheen of the hair and in its general appearance of healthy growth. Tatcho is sold by Chemists and Stores all over the world in bottles at 1s. and 2s. 9d., each bottle bearing the following guarantee:—

“I guarantee that this preparation is made according to the formula recommended by me.”

Geo R Sims



'What delightful little Garments!'

This is the kind of expression one uses when seeing the Chilprufe Pure Wool underclothing for the first time, and rightly too. They are delightful in every sense of the word—*delightful to see, delightful to handle, and delightful to wear.* Their softness and daintiness charms, and, unlike most woollen garments, their fairy-like daintiness is preserved as long as they last. Wash them as much as you like (with ordinary care, of course), and they will retain their beautiful pearl-white colour and will not thicken, felt or shrink. "Once Chilprufe, always Chilprufe" is the motto of every mother who has tried it, because she knows the bairns are safe from chills in their Chilprufe Woolies.

CHILPRUFE for CHILDREN

Of all Drapers and Outfitters, or address of nearest shop on application.

Write for beautifully illustrated booklet, post free on receipt of post card mentioning "The Quiver."

THE CHILPRUFE MANFG. CO., LEICESTER.



Boots ...	12/6
Shoes ...	10/6
Hats ...	3/9
Raincoats ...	35/-
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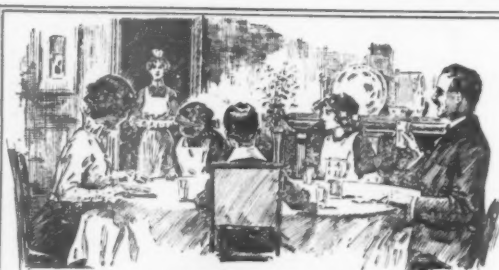


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What shall we have
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Why not make
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There is a simple yet most effective method of curing Sciatica that has thousands of grateful advocates who have been so fortunate as to try it. Please bear in mind, when electricity is mentioned in this connection it has no relation to shock of any description. The current is self-applied, continuous and soothing in effect, and a force which no Sciatic pain, no matter how severe, can long resist.

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You should write at once for the free book that fully explains the treatment. It is an eighty-page illustrated pamphlet, and ought to be in the hands of every sufferer.

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On sale everywhere. See the band on every loaf.

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"Used while you Sleep"

for Whooping Cough, Spasmodic Croup, Asthma, Sore Throat, Coughs, Bronchitis, Colds, Catarrh.

Don't fail to use Cresolene for the distressing and often fatal affections for which it is recommended. It is a simple, safe and effective drugless treatment. Vaporized Cresolene stops the paroxysms of Whooping Cough and relieves Spasmodic Croup at once. It is a boon to sufferers of asthma. The air carrying the antiseptic vapour, inspired with every breath, makes breathing easy, soothes the sore throat, and stops the cough, assuring restful nights. Cresolene relieves the bronchial complications of Scarlet Fever and Measles, and is a valuable aid in the treatment of Diphtheria. Cresolene's best recommendation is its 35 years of successful use. Send post card for Descriptive Booklet to Selling Agents—

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3,000 CURES IN TEN MONTHS.

This is the Record of my new Three-fold Absorption Treatment which is guaranteed to cure all forms of

PILES

My Free Offer

Every person cutting out and sending me the coupon below at once will get—**Free to Try**—my complete new 3-fold Absorption cure for Piles, Ucer, Fissure, Prolapse,



My Record—3,000 cures in 10 months.
Giles W. Van Vleck.

Tumours, Constipation, and all rectal troubles. My treatment has effected a remarkable cure in the case of Henry F. Stott, of 5 Bottomley Street, Middlesbrough-on-Tees. Mr. Stott says: "I have suffered from Piles about five years, and after using all kinds of ointments recommended by different people I became worse, so that I sought the services of a doctor. He treated me for about five weeks, and then said I was cured. A week later I became worse, until at last I could hardly walk. I sought another doctor, and he informed me that he could do nothing, that an operation was the only hope. This I declined to undergo, and fortunately at this time I saw your advertisement, and I am pleased to say that from the first week I began to feel ease from your treatment. I can now safely say that I am cured." Mr. Stott wrote us some months later, and said: "A thousand thanks to you for your kindness to me. I can say with confidence that I am all right again." I will send you my treatment; if you are fully satisfied with the benefit received you can send me 5s. If not, you have only to say so, and it costs you nothing; you decide after a thorough trial. This wonderful Absorption Treatment, which I am offering free, is even curing cases of 30 and 40 years' standing as well as all the earlier stages. Act now, and save yourself untold suffering, for piles lead to fistula and the deadly cancer. My three-fold treatment cures to stay cured, because it is constitutional as well as local, and I want you to try it at my expense.

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Only one trial packet to one address. 1251

Send no money—just the coupon and 3 penny stamps—to GILES W. VAN VLECK, 1251 EAUCLARE HOUSE, WINE OFFICE COURT, LONDON, E.C. Write to-day.

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We do not believe there is any toy or combination of toys, or games, or any other thing that enters into the life of a child, that is even remotely capable of inducing such thoughts while at play—truly, modelling with Plasticine is "Education in the guise of play."

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THIS UMBRELLA

photographed before and after repair, is an example of what can be done in the Stanworth workshops.

A complete wreck in the first picture, the second shows the poor "patient" after being repaired and re-covered with the famous Stanworth "Defiance" Silk Union.

Send us your old Umbrella

to-day together with P.O. for 5/-, and it will reach you per return of post, looking as fresh as on the day you first purchased it. Postage on Foreign Orders 1/- extra.

A post card will bring you our Illustrated Catalogue of Stanworth "Defiance" Umbrellas, and patterns for recovering umbrellas from 2/6 upwards.

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HORLICKS Malted Milk
COCOA Sustaining
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Also HORLICKS M.M. packet Chocolate
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100,000 Rugs Given Away GUARANTEED GENUINE BARGAINS

THIS PHENOMENAL OFFER is made to the readers of THE QUIVER (11/12/1916) only. On receipt of Postal Order for 1/- we will forward, direct from our looms to your address, one of our Half-Guinea Genuine Seamless Woven Reversible Carpets, suitable for Drawing-room, Dining-room, Bedroom, &c. handsomely bordered and woven in 20 different patterns, and large enough to cover any ordinary-sized room. These Carpets will be sold as an advertisement for our goods. Below the Actual Cost of Production. They are made of material equal to what and, being a speciality of our own, can only be obtained direct from our Looms, thus saving the Purchaser all Middle Profits. Whichever Carpet we shall ABSOLUTELY GIVE AWAY a very handsome Rug to match, or we will send Two Carpets and Two Rugs for 10/-, none willingly returned if not approved. Thousands of Unsolicited testimonials received. **Galaxy Illustrated Bargain Catalogue of Carpets, Hearthrugs, Table Linen, Curtains, &c. Post Free.** If mentioning THE QUIVER (11/12/1916) while writing Cheques and P.O.'s payable to—

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Send to the Practical Correspondence College, 4 Thanet House, Strand, with stamps for return, a copy of the Test Sketch or any small specimen in pen, pencil, or colour.

If your work is unusually promising, you may win one of the Scholarships reserved for "Quiver" readers, entitling you to the unil-proficient Home Study Course at half fees—in small monthly instalments—balance only payable when you have earned £10.

You risk nothing, and commit yourself to nothing by sending a sketch for *gratis* criticism and particulars of the System that has helped so many to earn money in this new and interesting Art Work.



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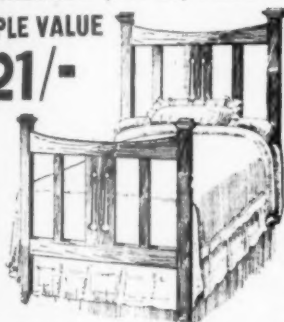
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This SOLID OAK BEDSTEAD, with wire mattress complete, 2 ft. 6 in. x 6 ft. 3 in. ... **£1 10**
 OVERLAY MATTRESS, BOLSTER and PILLOW to fit. Packed for Rail, 1s. ... **£0 12 9**
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House Furnishers,

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The Canadian Province for Mixed Farming, Fruit Growing, Dairying, Ranching, Sheep, Hog, & Poultry Raising.

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For those who are troubled with dry scalps we would recommend the use of Anzora Viola, which is Anzora Cream blended with Anzora Oil of Violets.

Anzora Cream for my hair. Nothing I had hitherto tried gave such complete mastery of the hair, for my wild unruly locks had defied the efforts of a surprising variety of cosmetics to subdue them. Yet Anzora contains neither oil nor grease in its composition, therefore it will not soil the tunic collar or cap linings. It is a real treat after a strenuous morning's work to be able to appear before the C.O. with hair as smart and tidy as when I had first brushed it. However—be sure you get Anzora. Don't be put off with anything the salesman claims to be "just as good," for there is nothing just as good as Anzora.

Sold by all chemists, high-class hairdressers, and military canteens, 1/6 and 2/6 (double quantity) per bottle, or packed in leatherette cases, 2/6 and 4/6 each.

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**Quickly removes SKIN ERUPTIONS,
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Sulpholine is prepared by the great Skin Specialists, J. PEPPER & CO., LTD., 12 Bedford Laboratories, London, S.E., and can be obtained direct from them by post or from any chemists and stores throughout the world.

Quickly removes the effects of Sunscorch.

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**See very Special
Announcement
facing page 220**



If you suffer from Asthma, Catarrh, Ordinary Colds, you will find nothing to equal

**HIMROD'S CURE
FOR ASTHMA**

At all chemists 4/3 a tin.

IF YOU SUFFER FROM RHEUMATISM READ MY FREE OFFER

You are doubtful, you are sceptical. You have taken all kinds of doctor's advice, have been dosed to the limit of endurance—all without benefit.

You have almost reached the point where you consider your case hopeless. You don't feel like throwing away any more money.

That is why I am offering you one treatment of Oliver's Foot Draft—worth 5s.—**Free**. I know what Oliver's Foot Draft will do. I know that more than one hundred thousand cases of Rheumatism have been cured by it. But I don't ask you to take my word for it. Prove to yourself, **at my expense**, that you can be cured, restored to your former good health, relieved of pain and soreness.

NO MEDICINE—NO DRUGS.

Oliver's Foot Draft does its work by following Nature's plan—removing the uric acid poison from your system through the skin.

Oliver's Foot Draft is a powerful antiseptic plaster. Applied to the soles of the feet, where the excretory pores are largest, and where it will not interfere with your work or your pleasures in any way, it brings almost instant relief from pain and quickly removes all traces of the disease.

Write your name and address, mail it to me, and a 5s. treatment will be sent you to try. Owing to the increased postage rates, we should appreciate the enclosure of 3d. in stamps from bona-fide inquiries.



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JOHN BOND'S "CRYSTAL PALACE" MARKING INK

Marks cleanly and never runs.

Sold at all Stationers, Chemists and Stores, 6d. & 1/-.

For use with or without heating (whichever kind is preferred).

USED IN THE ROYAL HOUSEHOLDS.



NEVER RUNS



Pressed into Service

Everybody is doing something for the State even the turtle. Freeman's have pressed him into little SOUP CUBES the real rich meat of selected West Indian Turtles—so that real Turtle Soup, once the privilege only of the rich, is now, in these days of high prices, a delicacy easily accessible to every household for a few pence per person.

Of all Grocers and Stores in 1/- Cartons.

Freeman's
SOUPS—CONDENSED
Watford

CURATIVE ELECTRIC TREATMENT AT HOME!

WONDERFUL INVENTION THAT GIVES AMAZING STRENGTH AND VITALITY.

Are you weak, despondent, lacking in energy, suffering from nervous debility or lack of vitality? Then read of the remarkable success of the famous Pulvermacher Electrological Inventions, which in the privacy of your own home re-establish a splendid condition of manly strength and nerve vigour.

HEALTH AND SPLENDID FITNESS REAINED

WITHOUT DRUGS OR MEDICINE.

Thousands of sufferers cure themselves of troubles such as Nervous Weakness, Neuritis, Lack of Vitality, Digestive Disorders, Indigestion, Constipation, etc., simply by adopting a short course of treatment with the Pulvermacher Electrological appliances. No need to visit any specialist's institute, no need to pay continuous fees, no expert aid is necessary. **YOU CAN CURE YOURSELF**, inexpensively and permanently at home, by wearing one of these appliances. They triumph over illness even when all other remedies fail. They supersede drugs and medicines, and give what these never provide—splendid physical fitness, robust energy, and every nerve centre of the body is flooded with vitality.



The Pulvermacher Appliances are the only inventions for the administration of curative electricity, endorsed by over fifty leading Doctors and by the Official Academy of Medicine of Paris.

Read the remarkably interesting illustrated book which tells you all about your weak condition and the cause of your illness. It explains why you suffer and how you can be cured.

WE WILL SEND YOU A COPY GRATIS AND POST PAID.

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SEND YOUR NAME AND ADDRESS ON THE FORM BELOW and the special volume, "A Guide to Health and Strength," will be forwarded to you gratis and post paid. Every page is of interest. It contains a great message of health personally directed to you.

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COUPON: The holder of this Coupon is entitled to a free copy of this book. Simply fill in and post to The Superintendent, Electrological Institute (J. L. Pulvermacher Ltd.), 17 Vulcan House, 55 Ludgate Hill, London, E.C.

Name

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As a matter of fact, there cannot be complaints when good food is prepared by good cooks in utensils cleaned with Vim. Vim is a splendid preparation for use in Barracks, Camps and Billets.

Tables, Settles and Floors are easily scrubbed white with it. Metals are easily polished with it. Labour is greatly lightened with it.

In 6d., 3d. & 1d. SPRINKLER-TOP TINS.

LEVER BROTHERS LIMITED, PORT SUNLIGHT.

V 111—22a

THE WAR AND CHARITIES

Dear Readers,

The strain of the War, mentally and financially, is felt by all of us, but we must not let the work of our great Charitable Societies go by default. More than ever it is necessary that those who can should render assistance to these sorely tried institutions.

May I earnestly commend to your sympathetic consideration the claims of the charities mentioned in the following pages?

I shall be most pleased to receive and pass on subscriptions for any of these. No deductions are made for office expenses.

Your friend,

The Editor

La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C
Christmas, 1916.

DR. BARNARDO'S HOMES

During this awful war Dr. Barnardo's Homes are looking after hundreds of children of our brave soldiers who have lost their wives. The Homes are feeding and clothing and training these children, and minding them until their fathers' return.

Here is a case. Private Tom Brown was at the Front when his wife died, leaving six motherless children, quite little ones. Two were twins only five days old. The poor father was distracted; what was he to do? Someone suggested Dr. Barnardo's Homes. He called at their Branch in Sheffield, and the Homes took the children in immediately and are minding them

until Tom Brown's return from the war. Three of them are at Babies' Castle. Two are at the Boys' Garden City. One of the babies died before it could be brought to London



TOM BROWN'S LITTLE ONES AT BABIES' CASTLE.

Will you, readers of THE QUIVER, help the Homes to support our brave Tommies' Bairns?

"Oh, it's Tommy in the trenches! It's Tommy by the gun!
But it's Tommy's bairns are crying while the work is being done!"

I gladly send Half-Crowns, equal £.....d., to help to support our brave Tommies' Bairns.

NAME..... (Quiver, Dec., 1916)

ADDRESS.....

To the Hon. Director, William Baker, M.A., LL.B., Dr. Barnardo's Homes, 18 to 26 Stepney Causeway, London, E.

Ch. ques and Orders payable "Dr. Barnardo's Homes Food Bill Fund" and crossed. (Notes should be Registered.)

CHARITABLE APPEALS.

The Editor of "The Quiver" will receive and acknowledge any Donations or Subscriptions for the undementioned Charities that are forwarded to him, addressed La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

—to the Horse what the Red-Cross is to the Man

In every field of the Great War the horses of the British Army are doing their part in the great conflict. Tired and worn by violent and prolonged exertion, overcome by disease, and stricken on the field of battle, thousands would die were it not for the efficient help given them. But much more remains to be done. **More funds are wanted.** Will you help by giving a little to aid the

R.S.P.C.A. FUND for SICK and WOUNDED HORSES

(Chairman: H.G. the DUKE of PORTLAND, K.G.)

to minister to these dumb sufferers of the War?

This is the **only organisation approved by the War Office** for rendering assistance to the British horses during the War.

All who wish to help the British horses which are doing such splendid work at home and at the front should send their gifts to the Hon. Secretary—

R.S.P.C.A. FUND, 105, Jermyn Street, London, S.W.

FOR THE CHILDREN OF THE EMPIRE

THE CHURCH OF ENGLAND Waifs & Strays Society

is the Church's official organisation
for Homeless and Destitute Children.

IT GIVES

**HOME LIFE,
EFFICIENT TRAINING,
RELIGIOUS EDUCATION.**

4,800 Children now in its charge.
116 Homes, including Farm, Industrial and
Cripples' Homes.
More than **21,000** Children rescued.

HELP URGENTLY NEEDED

Gifts gratefully received by
PREBENDARY RUDOLF,
Old Town Hall, Kennington Road, London, S.E.

[Cheques, etc., **crossed** and payable to
"Waifs and Strays."

Britain's Sure Shield.

THE Church Army

has a number of special

RECREATION HUTS,

at lonely naval bases; and a

Royal Naval Auxiliary Hospital

in SCOTLAND

FOR OUR GALLANT SEAMEN;

in addition to a very large number of HUTS,
TENTS and CLUBS for the Troops in
Home Camps and on all the fighting Fronts.

GIFTS

towards the large expenses
most gratefully received.

Cheques crossed "Barclay's, a/c Church Army,"
payable to Prebendary Carlile, D.D., Hon. Chief
Sec., Headquarters, Bryanston Street, Marble
Arch, W.

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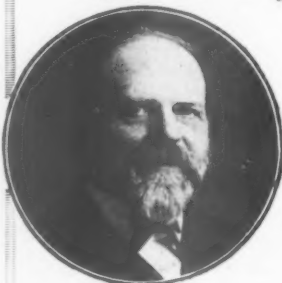
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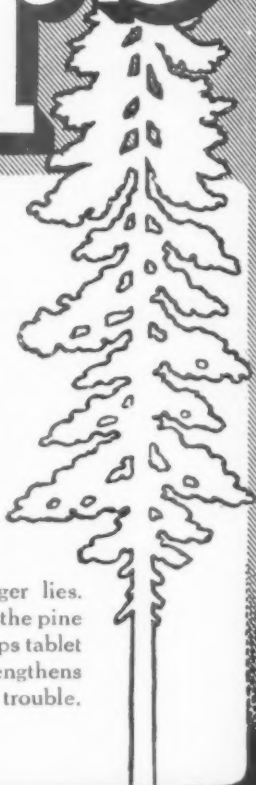
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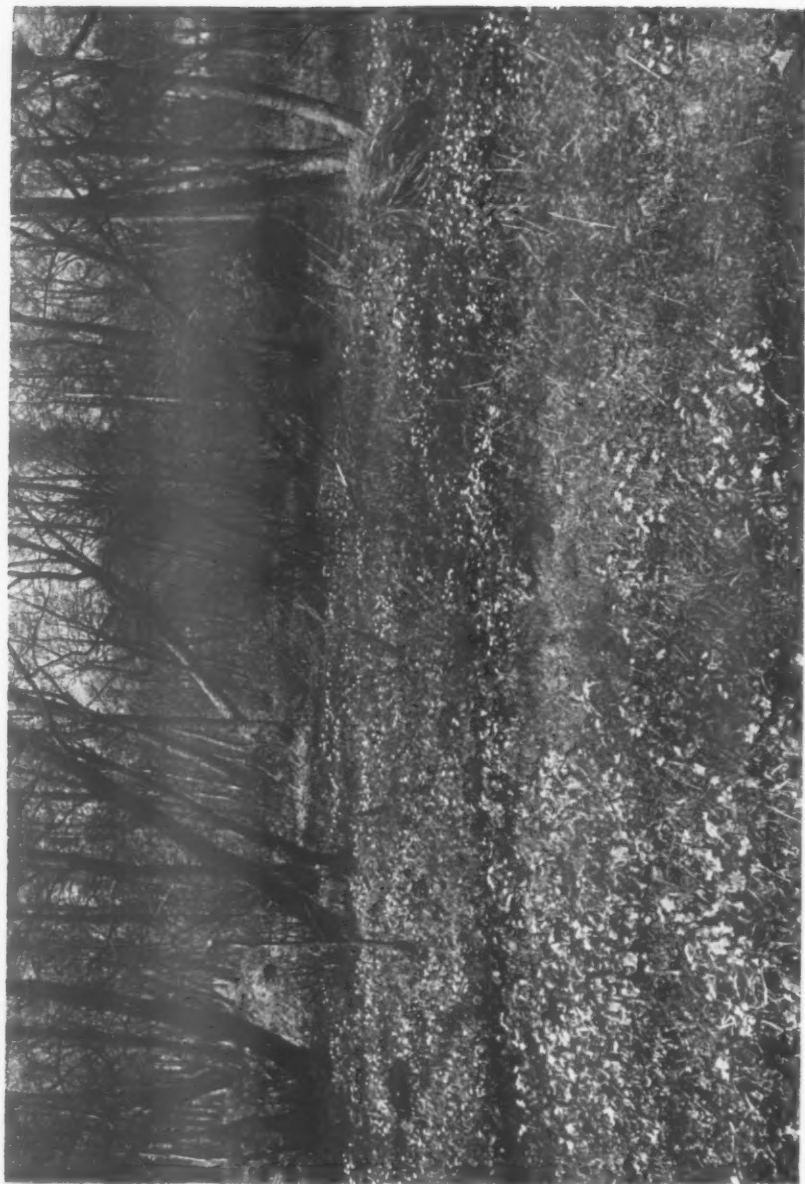
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"Perfumed amber cups which, when March comes,
Gentle daisies and windy woods, and speak
The resurrection."
—*John Keats*

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The QUIVER

CHRISTMAS · NUMBER

VOL. LII., No. 2

DECEMBER, 1916

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

A Story of Christmas in the Desolate Lands

By W. M. GRAHAM

INTO the Desolate Lands beyond Snake River, where the foot of man seldom treads except when the more venturesome trappers go there seeking pelts, Dennis Stuart and Peter Henderson had penetrated a year ago with their packs on their backs and their lives in their hands, and the wilderness of snow had swallowed them up, and the haunts of men had known them no more. For no message comes from the Desolate Lands to civilisation until, if the luck holds, the adventurers return with their store of furs to turn them into hard coin. Or, if the luck is on the cross—and Fortune is often but a sorry jade in those forsaken regions—a snow-covered grave beneath some pine tree is the only remembrance of the too daring adventurer, and that is soon obliterated by the hand of Time and the exigencies of the weather.

Fortune had, on the whole, been kind to Stuart and Henderson, for at the end of the year they were still alive and well, and had a large collection of furs. But the year's solitude and the deadly monotony had wrought a surprising change in the two men. When they had determined twelve months before to leave their fellows and go farther north together, they had been the closest friends, despite a marked dissimilarity in character. Dennis Stuart was an Englishman who had taken to the life of a trapper

from sheer love of adventure. His tall, well-knit frame, long-sighted, steady grey eyes and general air of fitness proclaimed him the right man for the job. Peter Henderson, a Canadian by birth, was a big, lumbering, loosely-knit fellow, immensely strong and somewhat silent and morose. People wondered what the two men had in common, but they had themselves decided that they were well-mated enough to go alone into the Desolate Lands for two winters. They had reckoned, however, without sufficient knowledge of the malign influence of utter solitude. And so subtle was its effect upon the two men, thrown absolutely upon one another without any outside interests, that by the beginning of the second winter they were in that condition usually known as "nervy." There was friction over the least thing, resentment smouldered, and only waited an opportunity to break out into active flame.

This undercurrent of resentment came to a head over some commonplace remark made by Henderson, whose brain worked slowly and contained few ideas, about the weather, which had been very inclement lately. He had said the same thing several times before during the last week or two, for the sake of making conversation, and the futility of it grated on Stuart's already overstrung nerves.

"For goodness' sake tell us something we

THE QUIVER

don't know," he growled, looking up from the animal he was skinning. "Why on earth can't you talk about something interesting, instead of harping on the same old thing?"

Peter, who was frying the bacon for supper, in his turn was riled by the superior tones.

"Well, since you're so mighty particular, I'll tell you something that perhaps you don't know," he sneered, "and that is, that the grub's getting short, and if we don't get some more from somewhere we'll be in Queer Street soon. So put that in your pipe and smoke it."

Dennis knew that they had not had many birds or fish lately, and that they were living almost entirely on the food they had in the shanty; but as Peter was the cook, and as neither of them had realised in this, their first expedition so far north, that they must husband their resources, he had thought little of it. Now he glanced across at Peter a trifle anxiously.

"Don't try and get a rise out of me," he said.

"You don't believe it?" returned Peter. "Well, look for yourself. Seeing is believing, they say."

Dennis, affecting unconcern, rose nonchalantly, and, strolling across the shanty, examined the state of the stores. But his nonchalance changed to acute uneasiness when he saw how low the food was running. Flour, bacon, beans, tinned foods, all were rapidly disappearing, and even his inexperienced eye could tell that what was left could not possibly tide them over many more weeks. His quick temper, fired by anxiety, flared up suddenly.

"You fool—you crass fool!" he said tersely, turning round on Peter. "Why on earth couldn't you have spoken sooner? We would have economised. I never dreamed——"

"And yet you are always dreaming," scoffed Henderson, who secretly envied his partner's cleverness.

"That's better than always eating," said Stuart biting. Peter saw an implied suggestion in the taunt, and rose savagely to the bait.

"Do you mean to suggest that I've had more than my share of the food?" he cried hoarsely.

"Well, it seems mighty queer somehow,"

remarked Dennis sweetly, growing calmer as Peter waxed more furious.

"You liar! You hound! You—you——" Henderson was almost choked with fury. Dennis laughed contemptuously, rousing his companion to desperation.

"Very well, then." Peter's face wore an ugly look. "Since you say I wasted the food, I'll waste some more." And before Dennis realised what he was doing, he had seized a small sack of flour, weighing about four pounds, and throwing open the shanty door he scattered the flour over the snow.

Dennis sprang towards him in fury, and the two men, locked in each other's arms, struggled madly, swearing as they lurched backwards and forwards, till Dennis's foot caught in something, and he fell, dragging Peter down with him, and struck his head heavily against the ground.

Peter released himself and scrambled up, but his partner lay still, whether dead or merely stunned Peter could not determine, till in a frenzy of fear he pushed his hand inside Dennis's shirt and felt his heart still beating.

To carry him indoors and lay him on his bunk was the work of a moment. Then Peter applied all the remedies on which he could lay his hands, and was heartily relieved when the grey eyes unclosed and Dennis looked round in a bewildered fashion.

"What's up? I feel mighty stupid," he said. Then the whole affair came back to him. Peter had the grace to make a lumbering apology, which was nevertheless genuine, and his companion, realising that he had been as much to blame, shrugged his shoulders and held his tongue. But the incident left them both in a guarded mood, ready to flare up again at the first opportunity.

A week later Peter spoilt a batch of bread he was making, and the waste of flour roused Dennis to an angry jibe. Peter, in answer, deliberately flung on to the fire two books belonging to Dennis, which were all the reading matter he had with him, and which he valued immensely for that reason. The huge wood fire licked up the volumes before Dennis could rescue them. With a snarl of rage he drew his knife and rushed at his partner, forcing him back into a corner. Peter struggled desperately, in terror of his life, for he read murder in Dennis's eyes, and at last he succeeded in wrenching away the

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

knife and flinging it across the room. Then he stood panting, wiping the perspiration from his face, in spite of the cold outside. Dennis turned on his heel.

"I'll be even with you for that," he said, picking up the knife and putting it back into his belt.

After this the two men were always on the watch. Peter was afraid lest Dennis should make good his threat; and Dennis, aware that Peter was afraid of him, purposely kept him on the rack.

The food supply dwindled, causing great anxiety, which each man kept to himself, for they hardly spoke at all in those days, though they did their work as usual, setting the traps and bringing home the furs, cutting wood for the fire, and all the other jobs of their trapper life.

It was Dennis who planned a way out of the difficulty, while the slower Peter was still trying to grasp the fact. His companion broached the subject briefly as they sat smoking after supper.

"Our food won't last us both more than a fortnight at the rate we are going on, and as I don't intend to die without a struggle, I'm going to make a dash for Kenrick's shanty. It's only six days' journey if the luck holds, and if there are any fellows there they may have food to spare and give me enough to get on to Fort St. John. Anyhow, I am going to have a try. We can bury the skins and fetch them in the spring. Will you come?"

Peter scowled at his companion.

"Come with you, and you'd knife me on the way, most likely, if you got a chance. No, thank you."

"You fool! Do you want to die like a



"To carry him indoors and lay him on his bunk was the work of a moment."

Drawn by
Cyrus Cunco, R.I.

rat in a hole? What will you do, man, when the food gives out?"

"That's my concern." Peter's lips set in a stubborn line. "I came here for two winters, and here I stay till the time's up. I've plenty of shot. I shall kill my food."

"You can't do without tea and flour," insisted Dennis; "it's just suicide."

"You leave me alone. I'm not going, and there's an end of it. Save your own skin and let me look after myself."

His partner shrugged his shoulders. Let the man do as he liked. He washed his hands of him.

THE QUIVER

"Very well. I shall start to-morrow. I'll take enough of my share of the food to last me a week, and you can have the rest. It will keep you going rather longer than if I were here. Good night."

Dennis threw himself into his bunk and pulled the blankets over him. He did not understand Henderson's attitude, and at this time, full of resentment, he hardly cared.

Next morning he started on his journey after a curt farewell. He had taken very sparingly of the food, and he suffered a good deal from hunger and cold on the six days' journey between Snake River and Kenrick's shanty. What would happen if no trappers had taken up their abode there he did not dare to think.

On the sixth morning his food gave out, and he knew he was still a good way from his destination. He went ahead, blindly, covering mile after mile, directing his course by his compass, filled with a grim determination to reach the shanty or die in the attempt. Still, at the back of his mind ran the haunting thought that he might find no one there. He knew that it was considered very good hunting ground, but he could not absolutely count on that. Some chance might have taken the men farther afield.

In the waning daylight he came upon the object of his search—a little, rough log hut, on the edge of a clump of firs. He strained his eyes to see if any smoke came from the roof. His head swam, he could feel his heart beating in great thumps. With an effort he pulled himself together and forced himself to look steadily. Then he saw the thin column of grey smoke. He forgot his thirty-two years and his empty stomach, and shouted for sheer joy. Then he broke into a run and came up to the tightly closed door.

He knocked, and a man's voice bade him come in. Surprised that he was not the object of suspicion in this lonely region, he pushed open the door. A blazing fire greeted him. On a fur skin in front of it lay a baby, kicking and gurgling, and in the low bunk close by a man, with a thin, cadaverous face and piercing dark eyes, stared at him over the blankets.

Dennis shut the door and stood rooted to the ground in sheer amazement. A baby—in this God-forsaken place! Then he remembered himself and turned to the man.

"I beg your pardon. It was the baby—it took me by surprise. I've been trapping

with a—friend—beyond Snake River. Our food ran short, and I made a dash for it, hoping to find someone here who might be able to give me enough grub to get down to Fort St. John. My name is Dennis Stuart."

The man in the bunk regarded him curiously with his dark eyes. Then he spoke in a hollow voice, punctuated with long gasps and a hard cough:

"I've plenty of food. I can help you there. I don't know whether you can help me. I'm done for—and Jem is dead—and there's the boy. I can't die—unless—I can provide—for him."

Dennis stretched out a hand tentatively. The baby seized it with a chuckle.

"How on earth did you get him here?"

"He was only six months old. I carried him—on my back. Jem—he was my partner—a good chap—helped me. You see, the wife died—and I had no one to leave him with. Besides—I couldn't part—with him—he was all I had—of her. He's a healthy kid."

He stopped, racked by his cough; then went on:

"We had luck at first—then Jem broke his back—he fell—and I was left with the boy. I thought I'd wait—a month or two—and then get back to Fort St. John. But—I fell sick—got worse and worse—haven't done anything for weeks. A good job there was plenty—of food and wood. I'm going to peter out. But—somehow, I felt someone would—come. Her boy wouldn't be—left—alone. Will you help me?"

Dennis, still amazed, tried to accept the marvellous situation in which he found himself.

"I'll try, of course; meanwhile, can I have some grub? I haven't touched a morsel for twelve hours. I'll cook something for you too."

"Help yourself. Take what you like. I might manage a cup of tea. I'm past eating."

Before he turned into the spare bunk that night Dennis had fallen a victim to the baby's fascinations. He had approached it gingerly, half scared at it, but it accepted him quite casually, and amused itself by pulling at his hair and poking its fingers into his eyes, while John Kennedy watched silently from his bunk, his fears set at rest by Dennis's frank face. He would not leave

"UNTO US A SON IS GIVEN"

the child to die. That was all that mattered now.

Kennedy lived for nearly three weeks after Dennis came to Kenrick's shanty, and in that time he and Dennis drew very near together. Kennedy's relief and gratitude that he had turned up in the nick of time were very touching; and the younger man, on his side, was curiously attracted by the dying trapper and his sad plight. He promised solemnly to take charge of little Dick, and they planned together that he should move down by easy stages to Fort St. John. In the spring he could return to Snake River for his share of furs and also Kennedy's, which would make provision for little Dick.

As for Henderson, he faded entirely from his partner's mind during this week, occupied as he was in tending Kennedy and looking after the baby. He used to smile to himself in the dark nights at the ease and rapidity with which he had surrendered to the baby. He felt almost like a big boy himself.

It was not until the evening of the day on which he buried Kennedy—after the baby was asleep, rolled up in its blankets—and Dennis was smoking a pipe, that the fact

of Peter's existence came back to him. He thought, with a twinge, that while he had enjoyed a good supper Peter was probably having to economise rigorously. Dennis shrugged his shoulders.

"It's his own pig-headedness. I couldn't make him come. It was no use both of us dying like flies. If he couldn't trust me not to put a knife into him we are better apart. But I'll leave some grub here, and then, if he follows me, he'll find something to help him. I can't do more. I promised Kennedy I'd look after the boy."

His eye, roving round the room, fell on a calendar pinned against the wall. It was the kind that shows a month at a time, with a date and a quotation for each day. Dennis got up to glance at it, and was disappointed to find that the quotations were texts. He had hoped for some of his favourite poets. Then he gave a whistle.

"By Jove! To-day's December the 15th. I see Kennedy has marked off the dates. It will be Christmas in ten days' time. I'd almost lost count of the months at Snake River."

He stared thoughtfully at the calendar. Then he began again:

"If we start to-morrow we might get down



"Dennis shut the door and stood rooted to the ground in sheer amazement. A baby—in this God-forsaken place!"

Drawn by
Cyrus Cuneo, R.I.

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to Fort St. John by Christmas Day. It will be good to see the fellows again. They will have a Christmas dinner and some fun. Won't they roar at the baby?"

His eyes travelled to Christmas Day marked on the calendar in red, and he saw the text: "Unto us a Son is given." He read it unheeding, then turned into his bunk, and lay considering the plans for his journey. But his thoughts turned persistently back to Peter, alone in the Desolate Lands. There would be no Christmas dinner for him, unless he had the luck to shoot something. Anyhow, the flour and bacon must be almost gone by this time.

"I can't help him," muttered Dennis. "Perhaps he'll come on here." But he knew that Peter's obstinacy would never permit him to do that. He would starve sooner. And starve he inevitably must before the winter was over. Dennis saw the tragedy with clearer eyes than hitherto. Here was food in plenty; there a starving man.

He fell asleep while the picture was clear in his mind, to be haunted all night by dreams of Christmas, and of the old home in England; and every time he woke he found himself repeating the words, "Unto us a Son is given."

"What on earth makes the thing stick in my mind?" he asked himself irritably next morning, as he dressed little Dick with clumsy but gentle fingers. "I suppose it was finding out that Christmas is so near. 'Unto us.' Unto me, it should be, sonny—for your father gave you into my keeping entirely, so you are my boy now. 'Unto us'—us. Well, that can only mean Peter, and I don't reckon Peter wants a share of you."

Dick laughed in sympathy with Dennis's grim smile, and demanded condensed milk and buckwheat cake in unmistakable gestures. Dennis fed him, and in the intervals of satisfying his own hunger his thoughts hammered persistently. Christmas Day in nine days' time, and he was contemplating a Christmas dinner at Fort St. John, and had left Peter, his friend—once his friend, anyhow—alone. "Unto us a Son is given." He and Peter had shared everything since they had been partners, till this last quarrel. Could he leave Peter to his fate? Bother it all, it wasn't all Peter's fault. He had been disgustingly to blame too. Dennis

laid down his knife and fork and addressed Dick:

"The old calendar says 'Unto us a Son is given,' sonny. I learnt it long ago. And you're the son that has been given to me, and Peter shall have his share if he will, so back we go to Snake River to take the old fellow a Christmas present and a Christmas dinner."

Thus did Dennis veil his deeper feelings, but in his heart he felt, after many years, an echo of the old Christmas message. Rancour and ill-will were impossible at this season.

It was not till Christmas morning that Dennis sighted the shanty beyond Snake River again. The journey had been a heavy one, laden as he was with the baby and a store of food, but the baby seemed quite unaffected by the cold.

Dennis tried the door with some trepidation. How would Peter receive him? But the shanty was empty, though the fire was alight and a good pile of wood lay beside it. Dennis put down his burdens.

"Good luck, old chap. We'll make a surprise for him. Here, you sit clear and I'll get ready." He unrolled Dick and planted him on the bunk, satisfying him with some maple sugar. Then he set to work.

An examination showed him that Peter had practically finished the food. Dennis supposed that he had gone out to try and shoot something. He opened his pack and took out supplies. An old newspaper made a tablecloth on the boards which, supported on logs, did duty as a table. On this he set out his Christmas dinner—bacon, ready to be fried, beans, buckwheat cakes, a tin of salmon, and another of pears, all of which he had found in Kennedy's stores. A Union Jack handkerchief was the crowning glory. Then he set to work to pluck a bird which he had shot. For the next two hours he was deep in the mysteries of cooking, while Dick went to sleep in the bunk.

Dennis counted on Peter's regular habits, which would bring him back at dusk. About that time the bird was done to a turn, and Dick, waking up, was cleaned and brushed till his cheeks were red and his hair like spun gold. Dennis surveyed the table with satisfaction. His quick ears heard approaching footsteps. He was surprised to find his heart beating faster. The door moved



"Then Dick toddled into the breach, clutching a buckwheat cake which he held out to Peter"—p. 90.

Drawn by
Cyrus Cuneo, R.A.

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slowly, and Peter stood in the opening. It was Peter, but an older, gaunter Peter, with hollows under his eyes and stooping shoulders. So soon does privation set its mark in the Desolate Lands.

Peter's eyes fixed themselves on the table. Dennis caught the glitter that leapt into them at the sight of the food. Then he recovered himself and stared stonily at his partner. Dennis spoke nervously, doubtful of his reception:

"It's Christmas Day, old man, so I came back. And I've brought a present with me. We've always shared till now, and I thought you might care to still. 'Unto us a son is given.' It's been running in my head—Christmas Day—and here's the child, and here's the dinner—there's nothing missing."

Dennis rattled on, talking what he knew was utter rubbish. Peter still stared.

"So you've come back," he said slowly. "Come to spy out the land. Well, you can take your food and go. I don't want it or you. This shanty's mine now, so—git!"

He flung out the words like bombs. Dennis wavered before the furious eyes. Then Dick toddled into the breach, clutching a buckwheat cake which he held out to Peter. The latter started, as if he had only just noticed the child.

"A kid!" he muttered.

Dick flung aside the cake, and clinging to Peter, tried to lift himself up. "Up—up!" he cried. It was his only word.

Dennis held his breath. Peter stared sombrely at the child in his little skin coat. "Up—up!" repeated Dick, and the big man stooped mechanically and lifted the boy into his arms. Dick rubbed his soft face confidently against the rough one and patted the cheeks. He chuckled with delight, and stuck his fingers through Peter's long, unkempt hair.

"Where did he come from?" Peter demanded.

"He's a Christmas present," returned Dennis. "I'll tell you all about him if you'll shut the door and sit down. This dinner is from him too—not from me—so you needn't scruple about sharing it."

Peter turned and shut the door, then stumbled to a stool, still holding his burden. Dennis noted with surprise how deftly he

held him, so unlike his own clumsy methods. It seemed almost as though he must have had experience. He listened in silence to Dennis's story, told while the latter dished up dinner, and to the accompaniment of Dick's joyous gurglings. Then he said briefly: "If we're going to have dinner, let's have it." And Dennis, marvelling, sat down.

There was not much left after the Christmas feast was over. Dick ornamented himself with pear juice, then wiped his sticky fingers on Peter's coat. Peter caught him up and tossed him up to the low ceiling. It was Dennis's turn to stare.

Suddenly Peter set him down and looked queerly at his partner.

"I had a kid once—just that age—he died—and his mother. It sort of took me by the throat when I saw that one."

"You—had a boy—you—were married?" ejaculated Dennis. A leaf of Peter's history was suddenly unfolded of which he had been absolutely ignorant.

"It was fifteen years ago—long before I knew you. He only lived a year. I've never told anyone. I closed it all down."

Dennis remained in silent sympathy, knowing that Peter would want no words. He smoked his pipe and watched Dick staggering round Peter. Then he spoke again:

"There's plenty of food at Kenrick's shanty, and I promised Kennedy to take the boy down to Fort St. John. Shall we start to-morrow?"

He held his breath. Would Peter come? If not, what was he to do?

Peter interposed an arm between Dick and the fire, then growled:

"Why should I come? He's your kid—not mine."

"Yours, I fancy, by the way he sticks to you," grinned Dennis. "He hasn't looked at me since you came on the scene. Peter, old man, shall we make it up and go down to Fort St. John together?"

"Then we'd best turn in early," said Peter gruffly, "if we start to-morrow."

The next morning, with their furs and other possessions on their sled, they turned their backs on the hut and set their faces towards Kenrick's shanty.

But Peter carried the baby.



"He swung forward a few paces, then stopped short with amazement and anger on his dark face"—p. 96.

Drawn by
H. W. Brock, R.I.

"THE NIGHT OF MOTHERS"

By

VIOLET M. METHLEY

"Is the light there yet, mother?"

There was a harsh note of strained anxiety in Ismérie de Vieuzac's question. The voice which answered from the window recess sounded, by contrast, wonderfully sweet and calm.

"No. But courage, dearest; 'tis still early."

"I know; but—ah! I am so frightened. You do not realise what it is to be hunted like wild beasts—to know that pitiless, cruel enemies are close at hand. If they should reach Trévilion before we are gone—if they should find Armand here, wounded, helpless! Oh, mother, mother!"

The disjointed speech ended in an outburst of tears, and Madame St. Amaury came to kneel beside her daughter, slipping

one arm round the slender shoulders. She knew well what a terrible strain of mind and body alike had reduced gay, courageous Ismérie to such hysterical weakness. She knew that the girl was beside herself with fear, not for her own safety, but for that of her husband, whom she loved with all the passionate strength of her nature.

For the first time in their married life that husband was unconscious of her need. He lay in a heavy stupor upon the improvised bed, by the glowing peat fire, in his utter helplessness very unlike that intrepid leader of the Vendéans whom the Revolutionary troops so feared and hated.

Yet even the valour and skill of Armand de Vieuzac and Henri de La Rochejacquelein, of Lescure and Cathelineau, had not sufficed

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to save the lost cause of La Vendée. The Royalist rebellion had been shattered by the sledgehammer blows of the "Blues" under Westermann and Hoche, and de Vieuzac, fighting to the last, had been grievously wounded in the disastrous retreat across the Loire into Brittany.

Ismérie, like many another Vendéan wife and sister, had been beside her husband throughout. With the aid of two faithful Breton soldiers, she had managed to convey the sorely hurt man to the sea-washed Manor of Trévillon, where her widowed mother lived alone.

Since their arrival the night before, almost dead with hardships and fatigue, Madame St. Amaury had taken the direction of affairs into her gentle, strong hands, leaving Ismérie to spend every moment, every thought, upon her wounded husband.

"Do not be afraid, sweetheart," the elder woman spoke again, very softly and soothingly. "Everything is arranged with Luc Martin, and he is the most trustworthy and loyal fellow in the world. He will anchor just outside Trévillon Cove, and when we show a light in answer to his signal, he will send off a small boat to the beach. The sea is calm as a lake to-night; there will be no difficulty, once Gilbert and Pierre have carried Armand down. We must start directly we see Luc's light; it will take some time, for the secret passage is steep and slippery in places."

"There is no other way by which the 'Blues' could get down to the beach—you are certain?" Ismérie asked feverishly.

"I am absolutely certain. Have I not known Trévillon for five-and-twenty years? The one way to reach the beach is by the Smuggler's Passage, and the one entrance to the passage is from our cellar. Very few, even amongst the villagers, know how to find it."

"And they would not betray us?"

"The villagers? Nay, Ismérie, all here are faithful. They would give their lives for us willingly. Courage, little one! By this hour to-morrow you will be safe in England, and all your dangers and hardships will seem like a dream."

"It seems too wonderful to be possible. I scarcely dare to hope." Ismérie drew a long, sobbing breath. "Oh, mother, what bliss it would be to sleep once more unafraid—in the certainty of a safe awaking!"

"You will—and very soon!" Madame St. Amaury spoke with resolute confidence. "See, Ismérie, my own little child, 'tis Christmas Day to-morrow, and Christmas brings a message of peace and goodwill, remember that."

"Peace and goodwill! I have almost forgotten what the words mean." Ismérie spoke low and bitterly. "The dear Christmas of old is dead, mother—killed; all that is left is the fifteenth of Nivose of the Year Two of the Republic, One and Indivisible! Everything beautiful and holy is murdered, I think; sometimes I could almost believe that God Himself is dead!"

She spoke wildly, hysterically, and Madame St. Amaury's clasp tightened.

"No, dearest one; God is not dead," she said softly. "And the message of Christmas is always the same, however the world may be torn and troubled. You will be sure of that to-morrow, Ismérie, when you kneel to thank the Christ of Bethlehem for His safety and protection."

"Ah, yes, I *will* believe—if Armand is saved!" Suddenly a wistful smile lit the girl's haggard features. "Is it very wrong of me to make that a condition of my faith?"

Madame St. Amaury bent to kiss her daughter. The flickering fire, which cast strange lights and shadows upon the stone walls and ceiling of the seaward-facing room, showed the faces of the two, wonderfully alike in spite of the dividing gulf of nearly a quarter of a century.

For, despite her snow-white hair, the elder woman's skin was fine and unwrinkled, her blue eyes very clear and steady. Ismérie's face, ravaged as it was by terror and lack of sleep, with those weary, fear-haunted eyes, looked older, for the time, than that of her mother.

The girl started up with a little frightened cry at the sound of a low knocking upon the door.

"Oh! what is that?" she whispered.

"I will see," Madame St. Amaury answered, rising. "And 'twere best you watched at the window for Luc's signal." She paused, after opening the door, to add reassuringly: "'Tis only Manon, dearest."

Once outside, Madame St. Amaury's bearing changed; her face reflected the fear and anxiety which was so plainly written on that of the servant.



"There were ghastly moments of inward suspense as Pierre and Gilbert carried down the unconscious man"—p. 95.

Drawn by
H. M. Brock, R.S.

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"What is the matter, Manon?" she asked swiftly.

"It is Berton—from the village!" Manon gasped. "And—oh, Madame, I fear that he brings very ill news!"

Madame St. Amaury's face grew tense and grave, but she still spoke very quietly:

"I will come down and see him at once."

At the foot of the staircase, in the dark-panelled hall, a young fisherman stood, a lad whom the lady of the Manor had known from babyhood. He was plainly almost exhausted, his damp hair was matted upon his forehead, and his breath came in uneven gasps. He spoke in a frightened undertone, as though fearful of his own voice:

"I came to warn you, Madame. I ran across the moor so that I might reach the Manor first—before the soldiers—the Blues. They know that Monsieur de Vieuzac is here—they're coming to take him."

"Ah!" Madame St. Amaury drew in her breath sharply. "Thanks, Berton, a thousand times, for the warning. We shall be able to reach the beach before they come; we shall be safe there. None of these soldiers can possibly know the Smuggler's Passage."

"No; if 'twas only the soldiers, Madame, all might be well, but Ruel Keroulegan is with them."

All the colour seemed drained in an instant from Madame St. Amaury's face and lips.

"Ruel Keroulegan!" she repeated.

"Yes; 'tis he who guides the Republicans in pursuit of Monsieur. He has guessed how you mean to escape; he is leading them straight to the passage; with these very ears of mine I heard him say so. Oh, nothing is impossible to Ruel Keroulegan!"

The boy spoke with the bated breath of one who names a being sinister and mysterious. Indeed, a very halo of fear surrounded the person of Ruel Keroulegan amongst the simple, superstitious Breton peasantry of the fishing village. The one-time fisherman and smuggler, who as a youth had made himself famous all through the district for his strength and fierceness, had become of late years the most violent of Republicans. He had thrown all the force of his lawless nature into the cause of the Revolution, and echoes of his deeds came from time to time to the quiet village of his birth, although he himself had not returned for many years.

Keroulegan was known to be fighting in the Republican armies opposed to the Vendéans; here, his knowledge of the people and of the country made him doubly valuable.

Characteristically, Madame St. Amaury, having once heard Berton's news, wasted no time in futile questioning. She realised its significance only too well. Keroulegan was one of the very few who knew well the secret of the old passage. Indeed, he had nursed an open grievance against the dead husband of Madame St. Amaury, who had brought his bride home to the long-empty house of his ancestors, and so put an end to the lawless activities of the young smuggler.

It would be impossible to reach Luc Martin's fishing vessel before the Republican soldiers arrived. Of what use to carry the wounded man down to the beach, to be followed there and trapped at the water's edge?

It seemed to Madame St. Amaury that some outside power inspired her in that moment of terrible emergency, aiding her to think clearly and swiftly. Almost in the very instant of need a plan seemed reformed in her brain—a plan which was clear and uncomplex. And, very simply, in her heart she thanked that outside Power for the inspiration.

To Berton, the calmness of Madame seemed a thing incredible.

"Do not wait here," she said kindly. "They might find you, and suspect you. And do not be afraid; I know what to do."

Next instant she was reascending the staircase. From the deeply recessed window Ismérie turned, as her mother entered, and her face showed radiant with eager excitement by the light of the lamp which she held high above her head.

"Oh, mother, all is well!" she cried. "I have answered Luc's signal; we can go now—at once!"

"Ah! that is well, truly." Madame St. Amaury drew a long breath of relief. "We will not waste a moment, Ismérie."

With a quiet certainty of movement and an unruffled serenity of look, the elder woman completed the necessary preparations. And all the time in her heart she was praying urgently, desperately, that Ruel Keroulegan and the soldiers might not reach Trévillon until the fugitives were in

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the passage. For there is no better actress than a mother.

Yet all her courage was needed. There were ghastly moments of inward suspense as Pierre and Gilbert carried down the unconscious man. She went first, lighting their steps, her ears strained for the sound of voices, the heavy tramp of approaching feet. She could have shrieked with impatience at the men's ponderous slowness of movement; instead, she only laughed at Ismérie's nervous fears.

They reached the hall, and still there came no sound save the sigh of the sea, like the breathing of some great living thing.

They descended a worn and uneven staircase, reached at last a huge vaulted cellar, hewn from that living rock from which the whole Manor seemed to spring like some work of Nature herself.

Madame St. Amaury lighted a second lantern and went straight to a certain indistinguishable spot in the rock face. She pressed it with unerring fingers, and, as though by magic, a huge block of stone swung round upon a pivot, disclosing a dark passage almost six feet in height. She turned towards Ismérie, bracing herself for what seemed the hardest part of the task.

"All will be well now, dearest," she said. "Take up the lantern and go in front. You know the way; 'tis only to follow the passage down and down until you reach the water's edge. So good-bye, my child."

"But, mother"—Ismérie looked at the older woman perplexedly—"I thought—Surely you are coming with us?"

"Why, no, I am not coming," Madame St. Amaury said quietly. "There is no reason why I should, sweetheart."

"But was it not settled that you should?" The girl persisted, her hand pressed to her forehead. "I—surely I understood so. But perhaps I am wrong—I have been so frightened—so distracted with fear. I must have mistaken you."

"We did speak of it," her mother said cheerfully. "But I have since decided that it is better for me to stay here for the present."

"But—is it safe?"

"Why, who is there to harm me? I am not a dangerous and suspected rebel like you and Armand, sweetheart! No, no; I shall be perfectly safe—you need not doubt that!"

"You are sure?" Ismérie's eyes sought her mother's face, but found nothing to alarm her in its quiet serenity.

"Sure! But hurry, dearest; you must run no risks. Remember, Armand's life is in your hands."

"Yes, yes; we must go at once!" The girl's terrors returned; she flung her arms about her mother's neck and kissed her hurriedly, feverishly. "Good-bye, darling mother—good-bye!"

Madame St. Amaury held her daughter very closely, kissed her very tenderly.

"God bless you, dearest one!" she said. "May He guard you all the way, until you and our dear Armand are in safety; and may you know all the peace of Christmas far from this poor tormented country of ours."

Ismérie bent to take up the lantern.

"I dare not wait any longer," she said.

"Good-bye—good-bye!"

Standing at the entrance to the passage, Madame St. Amaury watched the little party out of sight. After some twenty yards, the narrow, sloping corridor curved abruptly to the right, hiding them from view. Still she stood and listened, tracing the journey in imagination, step by step.

Of a sudden she roused herself abruptly. There was much to do, and, maybe, very little time. She crossed quickly to a recess upon the farther side of the huge cellar, where casks and boxes were piled.

In feverish haste Madame St. Amaury sought amongst them. What if that which she needed was not to be found? The dread gripped at her heart. It was years since these stores had been touched, and she might well have been mistaken in her vague remembrances.

Suddenly a fair-sized keg caught her eye; with an inarticulate sound of relief she opened it and let some of the contents trickle through her fingers. Ah, yes, the black grains were quite dry; damp gunpowder might have ruined all her plans even now.

With some difficulty Madame St. Amaury rolled the keg to the entrance of the secret passage, and along it as far as the first bend. Here she set it close to the wall, under a projecting shelf of rock, tilting it sideways, so that some of the contents sifted into a pile upon the ground.

And now to complete the business. For

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a moment she deliberated, her sweet face very serious and intent, then gathered up a handful of the powder and scattered it in a narrow, continuous trail from the mouth of the keg to the passage entrance.

Into the midst of her absorbed attention broke a new sound—the murmur of voices, the fall of feet in the house above. A loud, peremptory voice spoke, so near at hand that the words were plainly audible:

"Wait here, all of you, and watch the doors in case the rats try to escape above ground. I will go down and make sure that the passage is still open."

Quick as thought itself, Madame St. Amaury drew flint and steel from her pocket. Stooping, she struck a spark, let it fall upon the trail of powder, saw it spring, red and glowing, from grain to grain, crackling and spitting, a tiny, sinister messenger.

Then she turned, and stood in the entrance of the passage, as heavy footsteps descended the stairs—stood there quietly, still holding the lantern.

Next instant its steady yellow light clashed with the smoky flare of a torch, carried by a tall and broad-shouldered man, who swung forward a few paces, then stopped short with amazement and anger on his dark face.

His dress was something between that of a fisherman and the typical sansculottic soldier of the day. Wide breeches were thrust into high sea boots, and his collar was open at the neck in sailor fashion, but he wore a scarlet woollen "cap of liberty," drawn down over shaggy black locks, and a tricoloured sash twisted about his body held a couple of pistols and a long cavalry sword.

His whole air was wild and ferocious; white teeth gleamed in his dark, sunburnt face, and his eyes, in contrast to his black hair, were of a cold, merciless blue, like polar ice.

At sight of him vague recollections awoke in Madame St. Amaury, but in any case she would have known him as the much-feared Ruel Keroulegan himself. The fact that he knew the secret of the passage was alone sufficient; plainly he had come alone in order that his companions might not learn that useful secret.

As for the man, he was utterly taken aback for the moment at sight of the tall,

black-robed figure of the woman, with her steady eyes and quiet, beautiful face.

Before he could collect his wits there came a mighty crash from the passage behind her, a crash which echoed and reverberated from the walls and ceiling until it died away into silence.

Keroulegan read aright the sudden triumph in Madame St. Amaury's face. With a fierce exclamation, he pushed her roughly aside and ran stumbling along the passage for a few yards before coming to a sudden standstill.

Silence—then a perfect volley of oaths. Madame St. Amaury's eyes grew youthfully bright. She had succeeded then; the passage was blocked by the explosion. She could almost have laughed aloud in her joy and relief.

Keroulegan reappeared, his face distorted with rage, still muttering curses and imprecations. For a moment Madame St. Amaury fully expected that he would strike her down, but he stopped short, within a few yards, his head thrust forward, his hand raised.

"You did it—you!" he accused her.

"Yes," Madame St. Amaury made no attempt to deny or excuse her action; indeed, her whole bearing gloried in it.

"Curse you—curse you! They will escape—the passage is blocked, and there is no other way."

"I know it."

"You know it! You know it!" he mimicked her in a furious snarl. "And do you know something else, my fine lady? Do you know that you are going to pay for these grand doings of yours? Pay, mark you!"

"I am ready," Madame St. Amaury answered quietly. Yet there was no bravado in her air; she spoke merely as one who states a foregone and foreconsidered conclusion.

"Nothing can save you!" He snatched a pistol from his belt. "You shall taste the penalty of protecting the enemies of France. Don't fancy that I shall spare you because you are a woman! We are past mercy and pity, we patriots!"

"I do not hope for either." There was a touch of scorn in her voice.

"You knew that we were coming?"

"Yes."

"Then how did you dare to defy us?"

"THE NIGHT OF MOTHERS"



" 'Aye, she's dead! Well, it saves us trouble' "—p. 98.

Drawn by
H. M. Bray, R.I.

"Because—why, I suppose because I am a mother."

"You think yourself very brave!" he sneered.

"Why, no. I am not brave at all." She smiled straight into the face of the furious man. "But mothers are strange things, Ruel Keroulegan. Have you not seen a bird defend her nestlings, even from the cat itself? And there was a mother, herself scarcely more than a child, who suffered many things, near eighteen hundred years ago this very night, for the sake of her newborn baby."

"You still believe those old fairy stories, citizenship?" Keroulegan sneered.

"I believe them—yes; because my mother told them to me when I was a child, on this 'The Night of Mothers,' as your mother told them to you, Ruel Keroulegan."

It was some strange instinct which made Madame St. Amaury use the old Breton name for the Eve of Christmas—that forgotten name of the Ancient Church. It struck a note of memory, untouched for many years, in the man's lawless heart.

Suddenly he seemed to see a low-pitched room—a room full of the sound of the sea, lit by a flickering fire of driftwood, which showed the worn, sweet face of a woman. . . . And he heard again his mother's voice, as she told him the Christmas story.

"Perhaps 'tis a foolishness of mothers to believe these old tales." Madame St. Amaury's words seemed to echo his very thoughts. "I am sure that if your mother had lived she would not have cast them off."

"She is dead," he muttered sullenly.

"Yes. Perhaps it is better. It would have hurt her to see the changes in France—and in you."

Keroulegan stood silent, his hand still fingering the pistol, but there was a new look on his rough face—something almost wistful.

Suddenly, from the head of the cellar stairs, a voice broke in upon them roughly, insistently:

"Ruel Keroulegan! Has aught happened amiss? Where are you? They'll escape if we do not hasten! Keroulegan, are you there?"

THE QUIVER

"Curse them—they're coming!" Keroulegan muttered. For a perceptible moment he hesitated, then spoke in a voice which was harsher than ever:

"Here—do as I say, and quickly! There's not a moment to waste if you want to save your skin!" He caught Madame St. Amaury by the wrist and dragged her along the passage to where the pile of debris blocked the path.

"Lie down!" he commanded her gruffly, almost fiercely. "You must appear to be dead—do you understand? Keep your face hidden, and I'll shift the stones—so!"

He knelt, moving the loose blocks, so as to make it appear that she was crushed beneath their weight, muttering the while in a kind of ferocious apology for his weakness. "And, mark you, 'tis not because I'm any the less a good patriot that I do this—not because I don't hate all aristocrats and their handiwork. You've not softened my heart—don't think it! If it had been any other night in the year I'd have made an end of you, here and now; but to-night—I can't do it, fool that I am!"

"How can I thank you?" Madame St. Amaury whispered.

"Best not try; I may change my mind, if you make me too much ashamed of my faintheartedness. 'Tis not for your sake that I do it; 'tis because—why, because I had a mother."

He broke off as steps came clattering down into the cellar, accompanied by a chorus of voices:

"Keroulegan—where is he? Has aught harmed him? Or has he given us the slip?"

Keroulegan strode to the opening of the passage and shouted back:

"No! I'm neither killed nor a traitor! But those cursed aristocrats have foiled us again; they've played us a fine trick!"

His voice sounded almost incoherent with rage. And Madame St. Amaury, listening,

guessed that so he was working off his anger with her, with himself, with the world in general.

"They've blown up the passage—'tis blocked, so that we cannot reach the sea in time, and there's no other way down to the cove. But she who played this trick on us has met with her reward!"

"You've killed her?"

"There was no need—'twas the explosion did that. She lies under the stones and rubbish, dead as the Capet widow—curse all womenfolk, say I! But come and see for yourselves!"

Madame St. Amaury, lying motionless as death itself, heard the sound of footsteps approaching down the passage. She felt that men were leaning over her, heard their heavy breathing, their muttered question and answer.

"Aye, she's dead—no doubt of that! Well, it saves us trouble. Come, we'd best be going, comrades; there are more of these rats abroad for the catching."

Receding footsteps—silence—a silence as intense as the very grave itself.

It was some time before Madame St. Amaury ventured to struggle to her feet from amongst the debris.

Through thick darkness she groped her way back to the staircase, and up it to the hall beyond. She reached the room, where the fire had died down to a heap of glowing ashes.

A new light took its place; the full moon had risen and stretched a silver track across the sea. And at the end of that path Madame St. Amaury saw the outlines of a vessel's sails, and knew that Ismérie and her husband were already far on the road to safety.

Standing by the window, a great thankfulness filled her heart—a sense of holiness and peace. For the power of "The Night of Mothers," the truth of the Christmas message, had been proved once more.





"Where trees half check the light with trembling shades,
Close in deep glooms, or open clear in glades."
RICHARD SAVAGE.



THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

By Kate Douglas Wiggin

(Author of "Rebecca of Sunnybrook Farm," etc.)

HOW can anything new or helpful be written on so hackneyed a topic as "The Spirit of Christmas," or "The Spirit of True Giving"? The subject is so familiar, so commonplace, that we are apt to shrink from speaking of it.

We hear, on platform or from pulpit, "It is more blessed to give than to receive," "Love your neighbour as yourself," "He who gives when he is asked has waited too long," until they convey almost no meaning. But sometimes the old truth, seen by new eyes, takes on a different colour, and the blind see. Told by a new voice it carries a different note, and the deaf hear. Warmed by passing through your heart, or mine, it falls freshly as by a modest miracle.

The Universal Story

Nearly two thousand years it is—as we roughly count time—since the Christmas story was first told; since the Babe was born in a Bethlehem stable, and the Wise Men, guided by a star, journeyed by night and by day to bring gifts to Him. It chanced to be a Christian story, but what of that? Is there one more universal? It is embedded in literature, embedded in the heart of mankind for all time. What matters it if we are Jew or Gentile, Greek or Turk, black or white, bond or free, Protestant or

Roman Catholic? All that concerns us is the fact that the story of the Christ-Child has persisted for centuries, that whenever it is simply told it touches the heart of humanity, inspiring it to new tenderness and helpfulness; that it made Christmas; that it brought peace and goodwill to men; that it fixed a new standard and ideal of giving.

"The little Christ-Child smiled at me—
His eyes were like the sun;
And down the year, like sunlit tears,
The pouring light did run."

The Spirit of Helpfulness

The story is told in many languages, is expressed in many symbols, is hidden in many guises. There is the legend of St. Christopher. The child of the legend clung to the saint, imploring his aid to cross the river. The saint felt the burden heavy in mid-stream, but when he had made his way through the deep waters and reached the safety of the shore he found—nothing new, something as old as life or death or birth, found that the burden was a blessing; found that the babe he had borne upon his feeble shoulders was of heavenly origin. It is just a legend of St. Christopher, and there are no saints nowadays, or else there are so many that we pay no heed to them—which is it? At any rate it is good to remember that St. Chris-

topher in succouring the child was really helping the Prince of Peace.

For one thing we want to wage a war against sordid, reluctant giving; and against the thoughtless, tasteless, extravagant bestowal of silly, spurious things, bought in such weariness and indifference and haste that on December 26th the modern Santa Claus might justifiably hang on the chimney a huge sign reading, "*Do your Christmas swapping early! Re-mark all goods and dispose of them to your acquaintances with a New Year's card.*"

A Better Christmas this Year

Shall we try to make this year a better sort of Christmas party—not for getting but for giving and sharing; not for empty-minded gaiety, but for the joy that belongs to the day and the season? It may not be a perfect party, just at first, for we have rather an imperfect world to deal with, and our imperfect selves as well; but let us make a beautiful beginning at any rate. Let us begin to make the mood right here, and now, and by Christmas Day we shall come together radiating goodwill. There will be an atmosphere of fellowship and friendliness foreign to many Christmas parties, notwithstanding the fact that there will inevitably be strangers gathered there. Have we never met before? Why, the heart is the true meeting-place of friends, and at the real Christmas party we shall all be pilgrims going the same road, so what need is there of introduction?

And now what of the gifts at our Christmas party? What shall we give? What kind of riches is ours to give? How shall we enrich ourselves to be ready for giving?

Evidently a bank account, or

even a full purse, cannot be had for the wishing, or asking, or praying, or even sometimes by working for it. Yet money is a great thing to give. It is foolish, it is churlish to deny it; but the delightful fact is, that money is no more useful than many another humbler gift, when we try to estimate the values of the various forces that make the world happier and better. If we have not got money we cannot give it, that is very certain, and we are also often limited in intellectual gifts that can be used for the service of humanity. Knowledge in its best sense means more than mere information; it means inspiration, a wider horizon, a larger ability to stimulate and aid the weaker brethren; but it is very clear that a man or woman who works eight or ten hours on week-days, and has a dozen duties and responsibilities for evenings and Sundays, cannot do much reading or studying. Fortunately there are other avenues than books by which knowledge can be attained, and it is better to feel deeply a few things than merely to know about ten thousand; but, broadly speaking, the cultivation of the intellect is attended with considerable difficulty, and takes a certain amount of leisure, so that we cannot all give the treasures of a well-stocked mind to our fellow-creatures.

The Best of Gifts

Then what is left? Why, is it not wonderful that, after all, the very best part of ourselves is left to give—the riches of heart and spirit—and that there we are less limited than in any other department of giving? I doubt that a first-class brain can ever be made out of a third-class one, though by infinite industry it may be developed into

THE SPIRIT OF CHRISTMAS

the second class, perhaps; but almost anyone with a germ of desire can have a first-class heart!

Some unfortunates are like human scribbling books, blotted all over with the mistakes and follies of their parents; some wretched human beings are hampered, not by the kind of poverty that stimulates, but the kind that enfeebles and crushes. Others are thwarted in their ambitions, or depressed and embittered by cruel physical pain, or they have starved for love and have never had a mouthful flung to them. We cannot expect these to dispense sunshine on every side and be royally generous with their gifts of heart and spirit—though some of them do achieve wonders even with their pitiful equipment; but here is an opportunity for us who are not afflicted. Why not for the sake of Christmas find one or two needy, unhappy, discouraged, lonely ones here or there, who have less than we, and give of what we have? We do not know one? Beware! What would that mean except that we do not draw them to us?

A Doubtful Blessing

A woman of forty years said to me not long ago: "I am very fortunate. I don't really know any very afflicted or unhappy people. Almost everyone I meet has a fairly comfortable life. Of course, many of them have to work, but they are all the better for that. And people never tell me their troubles! It is true I am rather reserved and am not in the habit of making confidences myself. So perhaps I influence others to stand on their dignity!"

I remembered on the instant a certain parody on a famous hymn of Dr. Watts:

"Where'er I take my walks abroad,
How many poor I see!
And as I never looks at them,
They never looks at me."

Which of us would choose that attitude of mind and heart, so safe from intrusion, so comfortably entrenched in selfishness? Think of having a hand that has never held another's when it needed sympathy or courage; think of possessing a wretched good-for-nothing shoulder that has never been cried on some time or other!

The Cry of the Shrinking Heart

If we could ever realise when our natures are becoming poverty-stricken, arid and dry, perhaps we could alter them before it is too late. If only we could be brave enough to come close to life and say to it: "I am willing to be ploughed deep if that is the only way I can be made tender! Send sorrow if it must be, that tears may fall on my sterile heart and soften it! Give me as much joy as I can earn, or can be trusted with, that sunshine may help to make me sweeter and more fertile; only teach me to live in the deeps of myself, giving all I have to give, holding nothing back lest it dwindle and die in the holding!"

It does not mean conceit or vanity when you believe in those powers that permit you to give generously, even royally, such things as smiles, kind words, praise, comfort, good cheer, courage, happiness, love, compassion, heart's ease! All these we sometimes say "cost nothing." Alas! which one of us would say it costs nothing to cultivate a golden heart? If it were easy, if it could be attained by a momentary impulse for good, a transient effort to achieve the ideal, most of us would be saints at this very moment!

"Longing lights the lovely fire : but
Longing brings thee still no nigher
To thy heart's desire,
Work, work, and thou shalt know !"

Surely longing and work together will bring results, so let us cling to the belief that the heart of gold is at least a spiritual possibility. Whatever our creed, or belief, or theory, or philosophy, of life—even if it is very vague and chaotic, even if it is something that in our moments of discouragement or ignorance we may call our *unbelief*—in spite of all, do any of us really feel that we are drifting helplessly, hopelessly along, with no compass, no star, no steering gear, no guide of any sort, within or without—no impulse we can trust, nothing to give, of any worth, because we ourselves have been so poorly dowered ? I doubt it.

What We Do Know

We do not quite know how, why, or from whence we came, or whither we are bound ; but we know that we must have been created, set in motion, lighted by some far greater force than we have any inkling of. And if so, then we do not stand wholly alone in this bewildering world. The main thing is to establish a sort of relation with this great source of power, by whatever name we choose to call it ; set up our claim, count upon it confidently, magnify our kinship. Then who shall fix the limit of our helpfulness ? If our well is deep like that of the patriarch Jacob, it cannot be exhausted. While we draw upon it, it draws upon the unspent springs, the clouds, the air, the sea. The very universe must suspend payment and become bankrupt before our bounty can fail !

Have I written anything new ? Not a word. But in the writing of

it I have warmed my own heart through and through, as if by the touch of yours ! I have trimmed my own lamp, if I have not yours, by reaffirming that the most precious thing in the world to give to your mother, your father, your sister, brother, husband, wife, your child, your friend, your God, is yourself—and that the chief business of life is the making of that self inexhaustibly rich for giving.

Love the Only Teacher

In the gathering of such riches love is the only teacher. In a climate of indifference, coldness, remoteness, lethargy, nothing can really grow ; the better part of us merely exists, in a colourless, flabby, boneless sort of way. As for hate, it blights, blasts, kills everything that it touches ; there is no hope for a golden heart if it harbours hate. Only warm love—that makes us participators in life, not observers and critics and doubters—only love nourishes, feeds, stimulates all that is best and divinest in us. I do not mean the love that is mawkish and sentimental, a thing of silly sighs and sing-song. The love I mean is strong ; it vitalises, energises, uplifts, makes us creative, converting the dull, dead-and-alive task into joy. "Duty tires so soon ; love runs all the way !" Only love helps us to bear an injury, only love helps us to forgive. Only love can create the cheerful, the wise, the understanding giver.

Bring it to your Christmas party. Every candle on the tree will burn the more brightly for it, and the light that streams from the room where you meet may be at least a pale reflection of the smile that has been shining down the centuries, warming and illuminating the world.

THREE CHRISTMASES

By

Mrs. GEO. DE HORNE VAIZEY

CHRISTMAS, 1913

IT was Christmas night, and Lady Baldry had organised a dance in the great hall of her ancestral mansion for the amusement of the house party who were spending the festive season beneath her roof. For three long days the young people had made merry together; to-morrow they would separate and return to their several homes. Victor Bruce and Moira Chamberlain, "sitting out" in a quiet corner of an upper landing, discussed the coming separation with the startling frankness of modern youth.

"Awful sell for the rest of 'em that we've not brought it off!" Victor said calmly. "They made dead sure we should get engaged."

Moira laughed, serene and unperturbed.

"If you'd any nice feeling you'd propose at once, so that I could flourish your scalp. I'd promise certain sure that I'd refuse."

"Awfully kind of you, but—I don't think I'll go quite so far, thanks! You see, there's always the beastly possibility that I might find myself in earnest. . . . You're so nailing pretty, and we've hit it off so well. . . . Don't know when I've enjoyed three days more!"

The girl gave him an appreciative glance over the top of her feather fan.

"That's ripping of you. Same here! I don't mind confessing that if I hadn't known before you arrived on the scene, that you were—er—"

"A hopeless detrimental, with a beggarly five hundred a year, and jolly poor prospects of ever making more."

"Just so! With that danger signal before me I was proof even against your *beaux yeux*. They are *beaux*, you know! The handsomest eyes I've ever seen in a man's face. . . . Quite thrown away. They ought to have been given to a girl. But—five hundred a year!"

"Pretty close sailing, isn't it? I get

into debt myself. All the same, you know it would have been fun—you and I together in a doll's cottage, playing at keeping house. . . . We'd have had good sport!"

"Till the bills came in! But it *wouldn't* be a cottage. It would be a horrid yellow, brick villa, with an aspidistra in the window, and coloured tiles in the porch. There would be a parlour in front and a dining room at the back, looking out on the kitchen wall, and a patch of desolate garden. Have you ever studied the back gardens of suburban villas as seen from the train windows? And upstairs there'd be a bath"—she eyed the long figure with twinkling eyes—"in which you might possibly *huddle*, but could never lie down!" She shuddered eloquently. "We should hate each other at the end of a week!"

"I expect we should. They used to do it, you know—our parents, and the people before them, and it worked all right; but we seem to have lost the knack. . . . You're the prettiest girl I've ever met. I'd marry you to-morrow if I had pots of money. I believe you'd marry *me*; but, as things are, I prefer to spend my five hundred on myself. I expect you'd prefer to marry a rich man, even without the *beaux yeux*!"

The girl looked him full in the face with her clear, hard, young eyes.

"Rather! Money covers a multitude of sins. I need not see too much of him, you know. In a big house there's lots of room, and I'd train him carefully, so that we could each go our own way."

For a moment the man's face hardened. Deep, deep down in his heart something stirred and protested. It was the old, inherited instinct of reverence for woman, of belief in her purity and singleness of soul, but it was buried so deep that he failed to recognise its nature, and reproached himself for a foolish weakness. "Don't be a silly ass!" he told himself mentally. Aloud, he cried jauntily: "Ask me down sometimes,

* * Dramatic rights reserved.

THE QUIVER

won't you? I'm a good shot, and quite a handy man at theatricals and dances. Promise to make Midas put me down on his visitors' list!"

"First catch your hare!" said Moira lightly. "I regret to say there are no millionaire aspirants knocking about at present. Never mind! I'll have a better chance next year. My father has lost a pile of money the last few years; but now he has put most of his remaining capital in a motor business. It's quite good, they say, if you have a connection; and one can't be squeamish these days. They have just succeeded in getting through an immense contract with some engine works at Liège, which will keep things booming for some years at least; so I'm promised a season in town. . . . Do you know where Liège is?"

"Somewhere—er—in the north of France, isn't it?"

"I knew it! I saw by your blank expression that you hadn't an idea! What did you go to Oxford for, may I ask?"

"To forget all that I had learned at a public school, of course! Whoever does anything else?"

Moira Chamberlain leant back in her low chair and stared critically at the figure beside her. Dark, sleek head, long, slim limbs, hands carefully manicured, feet encased in delicate silk socks. The cut of the evening suit proved it to be absolutely the latest specimen of the tailor's art; the white waistcoat was fastened with jewelled buttons. . . . Deep, deep down in the girl's heart something stirred and protested. It was the old inherited instinct of feminine reliance upon man, of feminine joy in his strength and vitality; but it was buried so deeply that she also failed to recognise its nature. She was conscious only of a feeling of impatience, which made her say pettishly:

"Is there *nothing* you really care for? Nothing about which you are really in earnest?"

Victor debated, his eyes thoughtfully staring into space.

"Don't—think—there—is! Except sport, of course. A fellow is keen there as a matter of course. He must play the game! But—ordinary things? No, I think not. . . . Awful fag, y' know, being in earnest, and worrying your head about what's going to happen. 'Leave 'em alone, and they'll come

home!' That's my motto, and it works out all right. Hang it all! We are only young once. Why shouldn't we have a good time? . . . Now, there's *you*, for instance! If I had let myself go, and been 'in earnest,' as you call it, I should have been left with a pretty big ache for my pains. I've never been in love, but I've seen a fellow who was, and who had been turned down, and—give you my word: he was a warning! I said to myself, 'Victor, my boy, *go easy!* Don't make a hash of *your* life by losing your heart to a girl who can't contribute her share to the family purse.'"

"But I suppose if I *could*—if you had known that my father had made a lot of money, instead of losing it, and that I was his only girl?—"

She looked into his eyes; he looked into hers: a faint flush rose in her cheeks; a muscle at the corner of his lips twitched, and twitched again. Under the glamour of that long, mutual glance the hard composure threatened to break down.

"*Rather!*" he said deeply. "And you, Moira—would *you*?"

Moira straightened her skirts and rose slowly from her seat.

"Who knows? If one were rich, one might indulge in—luxuries! You would be a husband *de luxe*, an ideal play-mate for idle hours; I might have been tempted to pay the price. . . . But I'm not rich, you see, and neither are you. Isn't it rather feeble to discuss impossibilities?"

"Moira!" The man came a step nearer, and spoke in a quick, hoarse voice. "It's the last night! I mayn't see you again. Will you give me a kiss, just—just for remembrance's sake?"

The girl drew back quickly.

"Certainly not. Don't be silly, Victor. We have buried sentiment so far—pray don't grow mawkish for the farewell. . . . There's the music beginning again! That rattling two-step! We are losing half our dance."

"Oh, by Jove, yes! That won't do. Come along, we'll do a bolt. . . . Sorry I've been an ass." . . .

CHRISTMAS, 1914

IT was Christmas night. The small country town was filled with troops. In three days they were to move on to a larger camp, but for those three days



"Moira straightened her skirts and rose slowly. 'Who knows? If one were rich, one might indulge in—luxuries!'"

Drawn by
Stanley Davis.

THE QUIVER

accommodation had been demanded from the householders of the neighbourhood. Useless to refuse to billet the men: the sergeant simply walked round the premises and decided for himself how many could be received. Few people—very few indeed—made any objection to receiving the men who had come forward to fight for England in her hour of need, and it was rumoured that those rare exceptions had lost rather than gained by their refusals. "Can't possibly take in two men, can't you, mum," the sergeant had replied jauntily to one grim-faced wife; "then I shall have the pleasure of sending you *four*!" And, true to his word, the four men had arrived!

Down at the bottom of Mill Lane stood the old Mill House, lately rented by a family named Chamberlain, to whom, local gossip had it, the war had brought a near approach to financial ruin. Mr. Chamberlain had had immense contracts for motor engines with a firm in—Liège! At the outbreak of war he had cabled madly—begging, insisting, that the goods should be forwarded "without delay!" Alas and alas! Did the wires ever arrive? Was the man to whom they were addressed alive to read them? Silence descended like a cloud; but the cloud was rent with flame.

Poor Mr. Chamberlain seemed quite crushed. His wife looked a poor dazed thing. The daughter (again to quote the local gossip) was a doll—a lovely, dainty, flighty slip of a girl; but they *did* say she was more useful than she looked. The charwoman who helped once a week at the Mill House reported to other employers that it was wonderful how she "turned to." "Laughs, and goes at it! Wears gloves over her hands to keep 'em white, but you'd be surprised how quick she is. Tell her once, and she knows it next time, and a rare one to bustle round."

On this Christmas evening of the fateful year 1914 Moira Chamberlain had entered the scullery and announced her intention of washing up. The one old servant who had followed the family into retirement was worn out after the heavy work of the day, and had still her share of tidying to do in the kitchen. She protested, as in duty bound, but her young mistress waved her aside.

"Nonsense, Mary. You have worked like a horse all day. It's a poor thing if I

can't help you for an hour. Now that we have six extra men billeted in the house it's impossible that you can manage alone. I can't help with the cooking; but I can, and I will, wash up. I don't dislike it—*much*! If I can have oceans of hot water; but if I lived alone I'd have paper plates. Oh, yes! it's all right. I've changed my dress, and this pinafore comes down to my knees. I'll roll up my sleeves, for I can't help splashing."

Old Mary looked, and shook her head. Like most old family servants, she was thoroughly conservative, and it gave her positive pain to behold her young mistress in working kit, standing over a pile of greasy dishes, like any bit of a servant girl.

"It's no use saying I don't like it," she grumbled. "If you've made up your mind you'll do it, whatever I say; but it goes against me to see you. . . . Aye, Miss Moira! These is changed days."

The girl's face twitched. The edge of dress which showed beneath her pinafore was black in hue. There was mourning in her heart also, but she said briskly:

"Don't talk of it, Mary, please. If you want to help me, give me work. If you have any idea how much easier it is to bustle about, and scour and sweep, than to sit still in the drawing-room and *think*! That drives me mad. . . . Go off to your own work, there's a good soul, and leave me to mine."

"If one of them big hulking fellows would just—" grumbled Mary, *sotto voce*, as she took her departure. Now whether she opened the door of the room where the billeted men were sitting, and dropped a hint, or whether some telegraphic message was taken by the air, history sayeth not, but certain it is, that within five minutes from her departure, a tap sounded on the scullery door, and a man's voice asked briskly:

"Excuse me—can I help with the washing up?"

Moira Chamberlain turned, wet plate in hand, and stared at the khaki-clad form. Amazement showed in her face. She dropped the plate into the basin of hot water and held out a wet, steaming hand.

"You! Victor Bruce! Of all the curious things! . . . Are you one of the men who are—?"

"Billeted here? I am! I say, what luck! Is it really you? Moira Chamber-

THREE CHRISTMASES

lain, by all that's extraordinary! I can't believe it. . . . Moira—*washing dishes!*!"

"At a scullery sink! And such greasy ones, too. And you——?" The girl's eyes scanned the man sharply from head to foot. "A Tommy! Is it possible? You must serve, of course. I knew you would serve, but—why not a commission?"

Private Victor Bruce took off his coat, and in leisurely fashion proceeded to roll up his shirt-sleeves.

"Well, I had a fancy for getting to know the ropes, to know them for myself, right from the start. The commission may follow later on. There's plenty of time, unfortunately, but if I'm to be any good as an officer I must first find out what it feels like to be in the ranks. Then I shall be able to lead my men!"

Moira looked at him approvingly.

"Sporting of you! I like that. I wish some of the others felt the same."

"Oh, they do——" he said quickly. "Hundreds of 'em. Thousands! Quite a common thing, give you my word. Two of my old College chums joined with me."

He had helped himself to a second towel by this time, and, in answer to his expectant attitude, Moira automatically went back to her task. The greasy plate was wiped over, swirled in clean water, and handed over to be dried.

"I'm afraid you'll find it hard! Some of the camps are very bad. Even the officers complain, but the men——"

"Oh, well!" Victor said easily. "One must play the game!"

He had said that before. Said it about the sport which provided the one serious interest in life. Moira remembered, with a quick stab of pain, the graceful, lounging figure; the white, manicured hand; and now here he stood—in private's uniform, drying dishes at a scullery sink, cheerfully preparing to face death or disablement at the call of his country's need. Because she felt so near, so perilously near, to tears the girl adopted a frivolous manner.

"Do you remember this time last year? Silk socks, white waistcoat, jewelled buttons—*scent on your handkerchief!*"

"I remember Moira Chamberlain! Chiffon and laces. Roses and diamonds. *Powder on her face!*" He looked at her scrutinisingly. "None to-day! You look

just as jolly without. . . . I say! Have thought of me at all?"

Moira considered, head a tilt.

"Um—ye—es! And you?"

"Um—ye—es! Sometimes."

Their eyes met, and suddenly they laughed—the bright, inconsequent laugh of youth! Evidently neither of the two had languished in solitude, but the discovery amused rather than pained. Moira wrinkled her pretty nose in a grimace of mock irritation.

"You are a wretch, and most unflattering. If the truth were known you didn't think of me at all."

To her surprise the man's face sobered. He stood arrested, wet plate in hand, his brow puckered in thought.

"I don't believe," he said thoughtfully, "I ever thought of anything but myself, and having a good time. . . . Seems such a long way back, doesn't it? Like another life. . . . Can't realise that only five months ago, in July, I was still playing the giddy goat. . . . I suppose you, too——?"

"Yes! Very giddy indeed. Business promised so well. I told you—didn't I?—about the new business and the contract with Liège? It took some time to carry out; but on the strength of it—the *certainly*, as it seemed—we took a house in town, and ran a car, and did the season in style. Then—July! In a fortnight—less than a fortnight—we were poor people, with just a bare pittance left to live on. A week or two later at Mons, my brother——"

She turned and splashed vigorously in the steaming tub.

"It's a comfort to work. I must find something strenuous to do. I was thankful when I heard we were to have six men. At least there are dishes to wash!"

"I'll help you with them! . . . We have three days. Don't dare to let anyone help you but me. It will be something to think of afterwards, in the trenches. D'you know—it's a queer thing—I believe I like you better in that pinafore than in all your frills and fluff! D'you remember what we were talking about last Christmas night? I do. The little villa with the coloured tiles, and the aspidistra, and the short bath. We never thought of the scullery—did we?—or of washing up dishes together. It—it would have been rather nice!"

There was a wistful tone in the man's

THE QUIVER



"Moira remembered, with a quick stab of pain, the graceful, lounging figure . . . and now he was drying dishes at a scullery sink."

Drawn by
Stanley Davis

voice. Married life on five hundred a year had seemed prosaic enough, viewed from the standpoint of luxurious bachelor chambers; but viewed from the standpoint of the trenches!

For the girl also the standards of life had altered. Five hundred pounds no longer seemed a negligible income. The luxuries of life had ceased to be all-important. Her mind was occupied with sterner things.

"It might seem nice—*now*! It would have been unbearable *then*! It's a different life, as you say, and now—it is too late! Would you—would you like me to write to you when you go out? I will, if you like."

There was a long silence. The red came into the girl's cheeks as she waited for the delayed assent. She had made so sure of eager gratitude, of exuberant delight; but the man's brow was knitted: he hesitated, and stammered.

"It's—sweet of you. . . . Don't be angry! I'm not ungrateful, but—better

not! It's this way, you see. If I thought much of you, as I should be bound to do if I had your letters coming in, to keep you always before me, I'd be so keen to come back! I might—I don't say I should, y'know; but it's possible that at a critical moment I *might*—shirk! If a volunteer were asked for, for example, to fill a really tight place, and—and there was a letter due from you next day, and the thought of you waiting at home—it—it might stand in the way! I don't want anything to interfere. I don't want to take care of myself. . . . I don't want to hold back. I want to be *in* it—the thickest part of it, the tightest place, to have no thought—none, but England and—my bit! Moira! Can you understand?"

The girl turned round and laid her wet hands on his shoulders.

"I understand. I'm not angry, Victor. You are quite, quite right. . . . Do you remember what you asked me for, last time, before you went? I'll give it to you

THREE CHRISTMASES

now, instead. For good luck, and—good-bye!"

"But I may come back!" cried Private Bruce. "I may come back!"

CHRISTMAS, 1915

IT was Christmas night. Despite weakness and suffering it had been a gala day in the big military hospital. Friends from outside had sent in offerings of flowers and evergreens with which the nurses had decked the wards. There had been an unwanted luxury in the meals, a welcome slackening of regulations; in the morning church services with the dear old Christmas hymns; in the afternoon a Christmas tree; in the evening a musical entertainment organised by the hospital staff.

Private Victor Bruce, lying helpless on his bed, had taken a passive share in the festivities, had eaten a slice of turkey, smiled feebly on receipt of a pair of mittens from the Christmas tree, and soundlessly clapped his hands at the *bons mots* of the staff. He had also, in the morning, made a weak but valiant attempt to join in the strain of "Christians, awake!" but his voice had quickly trailed away into silence, and he had pulled the bedclothes over his face, to hide his twitching lips.

Sister Moira, standing near his bed, had seen that movement, and for a moment her own voice failed, for she knew the meaning of that big hump in the bedclothes, the cradle beneath which there was—no leg! Just three weeks before Moira had been standing at attention at that dramatic moment in hospital life when the big doors of the ward swing open, and the new batch of wounded men reach the end of their long journey, and are carried to the beds prepared for their use. At the beginning of her hospital life Moira's heart had felt like breaking as she witnessed that tragic procession; but experience had proved how wonderful, how almost miraculous, was the change which a fortnight's care brought about in the majority of cases; so that now she watched with a hope which overleaped fear. On this occasion she had stood by, erect and alert, in the exquisite cleanness of her blue gown and white apron and cap, while Victor Bruce was laid on the bed by her side, and there was little surprise at the recognition which followed. He was too

weak to wonder or to care. During the last six months she had seen so many, many old friends come and go.

"Moira!" he gasped feebly. "Is that you?" And the sweet face bent over him, and a calm, level voice said encouragingly: "Yes! it's me. Don't talk, dear boy. Lie still! *I'm going to make you well.*"

Three weeks ago. There had been an operation since then, and Victor knew that for him there was no "going back to the front." This Christmas evening he lay silent on his narrow bed, while the thoughts raced. . . . Then there came a rustle of starched skirts, and Nurse Moira came and sat down by his side.

"They are giving the entertainment over again in Ward 2. All the men who are able have gone in to hear it again. I've got a whole ten minutes to sit down and talk to you. . . . Well; have you enjoyed your Christmas Day?"

The wan eyes looked into hers with a pitiful smile.

"Bits of it! This bit, for instance. It's so seldom I get you to myself. But I lie and watch you. . . . There ought to be an Act of Parliament that all nurses should be pretty, but they couldn't possibly be as pretty as you!"

"What a nice man you are! That's the best Christmas present I've had yet. You don't know how grateful I am to you, because—in deadly confidence, Victor—I have 'gone off!' Do you remember my complexion? People used to say I rouged. I didn't. There wasn't any need. Now—I'm as pale as paper. And my hands!" She held them up before him, enlarged, roughened, distinctly red below the stiff white cuffs. "They'll never be the same! I'm a damaged article, No. 23; but the odd thing about it is—I *don't care!*"

The man looked at her with glowing eyes.

"I know why you say that, you *dear!* To make me feel less sore! Thank Heaven, your 'damage' is not like mine. A helpless wreck!"

"Don't exaggerate. You will have a beautiful artificial leg, which will work so well that no one will notice the difference. You will hardly notice it yourself after a few months. It's Christmas night, Victor. I can't have you morbid at Christmas. . . . Do you remember?"

"*Don't!* I've been lying thinking

THE QUIVER

about it all day. Curious coincidence, isn't it, that fate should have pitched us together three Christmases running? Moira! Do you remember how haughty we were about my five hundred a year? It's shrunk to a good deal less than that now; but somehow it seems much more. Remembering it, I feel almost rich!"

"And so you may! We have less for the whole family. Our views *have* changed."

"I used to lie in the trenches on cold nights, thinking about that villa home we made such fun of. Sometimes it made me wretched, sometimes it made me furious; but oftenest, I—*laughed*! Yes, I did! I just lay there in the mud, and the slime, and the unspeakable filth, and howled with laughter to think that I—Private Bruce!—this unshaven, filthy, mud-caked ruffian—was actually the very same man who had scoffed at the thought of a HOME! And I used to imagine the different rooms and furnish them, and put two big chairs, one on either side of a rattling big fire, and imagine myself sitting in one of them; and—*er—er—* I say, Moira! d'you remember the bath? It wouldn't be too short for me now!"

"Don't take one-sided views. Your right leg is as long as ever, I suppose? You don't worm sympathy out of me like that, my man! I don't mind confessing that I've thought of that house, too. At nights sometimes, when I first came here, and the Sisters were cross and wouldn't show me the way about. And my feet! Oh, how they ached! . . . Can you crane your head far enough over to see my feet? If I'd had a vision of merino stockings, flat heels, and square toes two years ago, I truly believe I'd have had a fit. Between ourselves, I don't believe they'll *ever* squeeze into the old size!"

"Poor little tired feet!" The man peered at them with tender eyes, then fell back exhausted against the pillow. "Moira, the doctor said yesterday that they were soon going to move me to a convalescent hospital, near the sea. Did he tell you?"

"I knew. Yes. The old cases must move on, you know, to make room for the new. And you are doing so well. A record recovery. That proves that your constitution has battled triumphantly through the strain. You have a long life before you, and after the first months things will be easier than you

think. Have you any idea of what you are going to do?"

"I've been thinking of that, too. While the war lasts I want to go on doing my bit. There must be *some* job I can do. I write a decent fist. I could keep books. If it comes to that, why shouldn't I make shells? I don't want to be paid—just to be able to feel that I'm not knocked out altogether. That would comfort me more than anything else."

"There'll be work for you—plenty of work. Get well fast, and *er—*into your stride, and there will be no difficulty about a post. But—*er—after* the war?"

"Who knows? Who can tell? Work still, if I can get it to do, and settle down to a jog-trot life. No more 'sport' for me. That's a big pill, but I'll have to amuse myself in other ways. Books! I'm an ignorant beggar. Now's my chance to improve my mind. And I might get a chum to share a house. Must have someone to talk to when you can't gad about. I'm not thinking ahead more than I can help. That's the hardest part of this—this leg business, Moira. It smashes things up! There's—there's nothing to look forward to!"

"What's the good of saying that when you are looking forward all the time? What you mean is that you expect all the dull things, and none of the bright. That's physical, my man! Wait till you get more blood in your veins, and the new leg begins to work, and you'll tell me a different tale. I haven't nursed men from the front for six whole months without recognising the stages:—Meekness and resignation, and death-bed confidences for the first week. Second week: Rebellion, grumbling about food, references to *her*! Third week: Monkey tricks! Did you see those two men holding a string between their beds to catch my cap the other night? If Sister had caught them!"

"But they knew that Nurse Moira would laugh and enjoy the joke. All the men love you. You are the favourite nurse. I wonder sometimes, can this be the same girl I knew two years ago! The Moira I flirted with at Lady Baldry's ball."

"Don't wonder any more. I'll tell you at once."

"Well?"

"It is *not*! There's not a bit of her left. She died—died suddenly, poor thing!"



" 'But—er—after the war ?'
' Who knows ? Who can tell ? ' "

*Lesson by
Stanley D. D. D.*

THE QUIVER

Exploded, blew into thin air, one day—when was it? One 31st of July! And she left—*me* in her place!"

He looked at her with smiling, tender, pathetically-wistful eyes.

"Nurse Moira! Yes. And—I suppose you are going to stay on here?"

"Till the end of the war. Of course. Nurses are needed, and I can do good work. All the men like me. I'm prouder of that than I ever was of anything in my life. I understand the poor fellows. They are just great big children, most of them, and should be treated like children—humoured, and considered, and given little treats! Hospital life is monotonous, and anything that breaks the routine is better than medicine. Oh, yes! I'll stay on till the end. And then——"

"Then? Have you any ideas?"

"I have *One*. That's enough. I don't need any more."

"You mean—you'll go home?"

Nurse Moira smoothed her apron, puckered a corner between finger and thumb.

"I mean I'll—go home! I shall be tired. I'll need a rest. But I love nursing, and I do it so well. After so much experience it would be a sin to go back to the old, idle, social life. I couldn't do it. I should always feel that I was hiding my talent. And yet—rest I must have! I've thought it all out, Victor, and I've made such a big, fine plan. I'm going to combine the two—to have a home—*my own home*; and for my life's work I'm going to nurse and care for, and *love*—a *one-legged man*!"

She leapt to her feet, scarlet-checked, frowning fiercely to hide her embarrassment.

"Now, 23, no objections, please! I'm mistress here, and when I order it's for you to obey. If I have any trouble I'll give you a dose. . . . That's enough now! That's enough! If you get excited, your temperature will rise. . . . Open your mouth. Put this beneath your tongue. You *dare* to drop my thermometer! . . . Upon my word, you give me more trouble than all the ward! . . ."



CHRISTMAS, 1916

OH, little Child, who came to bring
A sword to earth, in stainless Hands,
Once more Thine Advent welcomes ring—
Once more the Angel-message stands—
"Peace upon earth,"—not so, O Lord,
Upon the earth now reaps the sword!

Oh, little Life, whose manger-bed
Held Mercy, manifold and great,
Have pity on the icy dead
Who know no longer love or hate!
"Good-will to men"—oh, grant it, Lord,
And sheathe the all-devouring sword!

Oh, little Feet, that learned to walk
In ways all wailful, all sublime,
Give strength to countless feet that stalk
In weariness this Christmas-time!
"Glory to God"—Amen, sweet Lord,
Beneath Thy Star—oh, break the sword!

ELLA E. WALTERS.

PAINTING NATURE WITH A CAMERA

Some Experiences in Colour Photography

By H. ESSENHIGH CORKE, F.R.P.S., F.R.H.S.

Mr. Corke, four of whose colour photographs are presented with this issue, is acknowledged to be the finest exponent of colour photography in the world. He is, too, a very keen botanist and Nature lover.

FOR some years past I have had the privilege of providing the coloured Supplement for THE QUIVER Christmas Numbers, and the appreciation which QUIVER readers have always shown for my work makes it a pleasure to accede to the Editor's request for a "few experiences."

We are all supposed to be lovers of Nature nowadays, though it is remarkable what a lot the majority of us do not see. The motorist "tours" vast stretches of country, and is in such a hurry that the hedges and fields fly past almost unseen. The cyclist in like manner covers long distances, but can often tell you more about the composition of the road-surface than of the scenery through which he has passed. Even the pedestrian, with a real love of the country-side, may ramble over hills and stiles, along field paths and cart tracks, through woods and glens, but still leave a good deal of the beauties of Nature unexplored.

The person who would get the uttermost value out of Nature must be both a lover and a student, who will reason to himself why

this and why that, what makes the primrose yellow and the wild rose pink, why has the rose got prickles, and all the thousand-and-one other "whys." He who would dabble in colour photography must not only be an ardent lover, but must have

almost inexhaustible patience: as a reward he will have opportunities for studying Nature as she really is that are granted to but few.

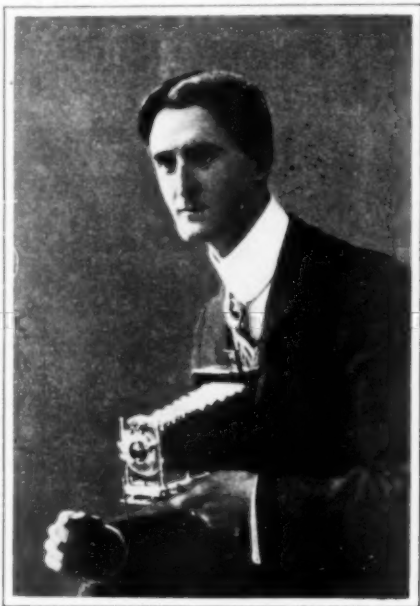
From earliest ages artists have drawn and painted from Nature, and tried to show her as she is, but, as the poet Thomson well asks:

"Who can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast,
Amid its gay creation,
Hues like hers?
Or can it mix them with
That matchless skill,
And lose them in each
Other, as appears
In every bud that
blows?"

It remains for colour photography to render Nature just as she is—true in colour and in form, and catching, too,

that wonderful blending that results when blade and flower "lose them in each other."

I think I can claim an inborn love of the country and of the wild flowers and Nature, and for years before colour photography became a profession, botany and photography were my favourite hobbies.



Mr. H. Essenhigh Corke, F.R.P.S.

THE QUIVER

About eight or nine years ago the photographic world was startled by the news that at last a real colour process had been invented, that could be used in any camera, by the two brothers Lumière, two clever French photographic chemists, who had devoted years to their research.

I immediately wrote to France, and was fortunate enough to obtain four of these wonderful plates before they were procurable on the English market, and the reader can imagine my feelings upon seeing my first plate appear in all its natural colours.

Then I saw that I could apply this new plate to my own special hobby, botany, and this I did, submitting some of the results to Messrs. Cassell, who immediately commissioned me to make them the series which have appeared as "Wild Flowers as they Grow," and since then they have published all my work, being the first firm really to exploit this new form of reproduction.

A Question of Exposure

The exposure that these plates require is very much longer than that needed for ordinary plates, and many of my flower studies have received from five to ten minutes' exposure.

Even on the stillest day there is always just a little air motion that causes plants to blow about, so that they would appear blurred in a photograph were not some means taken to avoid this.

Any grey hairs that I may possess are due to this matter of wind, and many are the failures traced to it too. I used to put up my camera and get it all ready, then carefully watch the flower till it was quite still, and start to make the exposure; when a puff of wind came I would close the shutter and wait till all was still again, and continue the exposure at these intervals until the desired five minutes were completed. Sometimes this meant sitting or squatting beside the flower for three-quarters of an hour before the full exposure had been given.

The Editor has asked me to relate some of my experiences in doing this work, but beyond the usual—so I am told—editorial experiences, I am afraid there is not much to relate. I cannot claim—like the Keartons or Radcliffe Dugmore, who specialise in photographing big game and animals—any very thrilling moments, or hours spent disguised as a tree trunk, or a cow, waiting for

some timid beast or bird to come within range of my camera, and I have not yet even been chased by a bull. At the most I can only refer to many more or less painful hours squatting or kneeling beside some flower on some grassy and damp bank, getting the cramp in my foot, but not daring to move for fear of shaking my camera, which has resulted in the rheumatic condition that has lately given me a premature experience and inside information of old age complaints.

Roses "At Once"

Editorially I have suffered about equally with all who have to obey instructions from an Editorial Chair; for instance, one September came a demand to make twelve pictures of roses "wanted at once," when, of course, the roses were over; and when at last I did get them, I began to realise what the public get for their money under the autocratic will of an ardent editor, especially if he be an ardent rose grower also.

Imagine getting back one's cherished plates for alteration marked, "The colours are not quite correct, the petals should be slightly more creamish-pink, shading off into a coppery-orangey-reddish-brown at the base"!

Then again, for one of THE QUIVER Supplements came the editorial demand to obtain at any cost a snow scene "of the typical Christmassy type, a village church, with a holly tree, and people with red cloaks to give some touch of colour, and a robin"!

"It can't be done," I said. "We don't get snow nowadays; people don't wear red cloaks, they either stop indoors or else wear grey mackintoshes; and the only really pretty church I know has not got a holly tree near it, but a blank wall, on which we shall get the colour right enough because there is a big advertisement of — on it!"

Waiting for the Snow

Still, I had to try. A certain spot was agreed upon up in the Lake District, and all we waited for was the snow. Upon seeing in the daily paper that there was "Snow in the North—Winter Sports at Home," and so on, I wired to the postmaster, "Is there any snow; will it last to-morrow?" and three times came the reply, "Little snow on hill-tops; melting fast."



"A flowery garden curtained round
With world-excluding groves."
WORDSWORTH.

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PAINTING NATURE WITH A CAMERA

The fact of the matter is, that an English winter is remarkable for its greyness rather than its colour, and the results of "colour" photography in our home winter are apt to be disappointing. To get a really good snow picture one wants just sufficient sunshine to gild the white snow—white of itself is, of course, no colour! With the four plates in this year's Supplement, both the Editor and I felt that a better result would be obtained by leaving out of account the snow that so rarely falls in satisfactory style in these islands of ours, but the snow pictures in last year's *QUIVER* were obtained only after a strenuous hunt. For days I had slept with the camera by my bed-side, with strict instructions for the local conveyance to be ready for the first fall of snow. At last the papers announced that snow had fallen near Dover, and after an exciting hunt I arrived on the scene. The sun had put in a fleeting appearance just before setting time, and it was a race with time to get on to the all-too-slow plates a permanent impression of a "typical English winter scene."

Blots on Nature

On another occasion—this time in the summer—I went off for a day's tramp with my father, who is a painter, and he was going to take me to one or two special little beauty spots which he had already painted some years before. On arriving at our first beauty spot I was going to photograph a view of the old bridge over the river with the village street behind, crowned by a peep of the church amongst the trees. There was to be a picture ready made, I thought, but I found there is a big difference between a photograph and a painting, and we are told often that "The camera cannot see."

The bridge was there, but just behind it was a large corrugated iron shed about as

ugly as can be imagined, the street could not be seen from the same spot as the bridge, and the church was quite hidden by the trees!

"Ah, I remember now that I left the shed out in my painting, and I went up the street to make my sketch of the church," said my father. That made me wish the camera could lie, and off we went, finding no subject to take all day.

Fivepence a Day!

Having drawn blank all day we decided to stop the night at Arundel and put up at the hotel there, although we had no night attire or luggage, not even a tooth-brush between us. We managed to find a hair-brush in the hotel, but as we wanted to be off early next morning we had to go unshaved, and felt rather like two tramps, which feeling was intensified by the discovery that we had only a few shillings left, as we had not intended to stay away the night! After putting aside enough for our return fare we had exactly fivepence left to feed ourselves for the day, and tramping with a camera is hungry and thirsty work too.

Just as we got into the train that was to take us the first stage of our journey, we met an old friend, a real friend indeed, who was starting on a holiday trip to Paris, and from him we quickly borrowed a sovereign, and went on our trip. That was a lucky day in many ways, for I secured three good pictures; but it will be seen that apart from the technical work, which becomes more or less easy with practice, these pictures are not secured without care and time; they cannot be snapshotted off like ordinary uncoloured photographs can.

As a matter of fact, all the pictures for *THE QUIVER* are commissioned a whole year in advance so that it may be possible to catch Nature in her right mood and season.





"Ladies and gentlemen—this is a nima-itation of the great Sennery Irving in *Ham-a-let*"—p. 124.

Drawn by
Wilnot Lunt

THE FAMILY OF THREE

A Tale of Christmas Time

By BRENDA ELIZABETH SPENDER

TEDDLES, leaning against the window-sill to the detriment of the landlady's Nottingham lace curtains, had been silent so long watching his stepsister's needle flying in and out of the dress she was patching for baby, that Mary O'Rourke herself noticed the fact and spared a moment in which to look up at his serious little round face.

"What ails you, Teddles?" The words were not very distinct nor her smile as generous as usual in its proportions, but since he understood that those defects were occasioned by the row of pins she was holding between her teeth in quite the professional manner, Teddles decided that she need not forfeit her right to his confidence upon that account. He lowered his voice and came a little nearer to her, still very

serious, and with a warning glance at Sis and baby playing dolls together on the old skin rug before the smouldering fire.

"I was wondering had he got this address. Or do you think he'll go to the old house, like he used to when daddy was there?"

"He?" For a moment the bright needle was held poised above the seam in Mary O'Rourke's little, plump hand. "What 'he' is in it at all?"

"You know!"

"I don't, Teddles. Sure, there's a grand lot of 'he's' in the world for your 'he' to get lost among them. How would I know?"

"Wait a minute, then; I'll have to whisper."

She put down her work and the boy drew closer, pushed back the bright, light hair

THE FAMILY OF THREE

from above her ear, made a circle of his hands, and whispered.

"What is that?" she asked.

He whispered again.

"Sandy Claus. I'm wondering will he come to-night like he used to, or doesn't he know where we live now?"

The laughter died out of the girl's eyes as she caught the import of his whisper. Just for a moment one saw what her face might become in another twenty years if her way of life were still a hard one. Then a kind of passionate tenderness swept over it, bringing back its youth again. She caught the boy to her, pushing the work off her knee to the oilcloth which covered the floor.

"You're not after saying much about that to the little girls, are you, Teddles? See, avick, you're growing a real man; you're old enough to help me, and you do—that's the truth. I'll tell you, Teddles, and then you'll see the way it is and you won't mind it. Old Santa Claus he used to be going about giving treats to all the children every Christmas when he was a real man."

"He isn't a real man! He's a kind of fairy."

"Hush now; he wouldn't be that. But it was a great idea he had, and when he went away up to heaven——"

"Like daddy and mummy? Does daddy talk to Sandy Claus?"

Mary had removed the pins now and kissed him, perhaps to hide a little twitch which came at the corners of her lips.

"I shouldn't wonder now, and both of them so fond of children." She spoke soberly, somewhat appalled by the application of her story. "Anyway, the fathers and mothers all said, 'Sure, it was the fine idea that old Saint was having, good luck to him, and the children wouldn't care to be missing their toys and things. We'll just be creeping in and they all asleep on Christmas Eve, and fill their stockings, and never a know will they know that it wasn't himself was in it at all,' and so they're after doing it ever since!"

Teddles, staring at her with round, blue eyes, put the concrete question:

"It was daddy put the engine in my socks on Christmas, then?"

His stepsister nodded.

"Daddy and me."

"And that time I had the blue top with the long, long string?"

"That was mummy and daddy."

Again her lips quivered.

"Then nobody won't put anything in this year—not even for baby?"

"It's myself was hoping to, Teddles. All the while I hoped, but things schemed on me getting so dear, and baby having to have this cod-liver oil. It's Mary O'Rourke herself who hasn't got a penny in her pocket without it's marked in plain figures, as the shops do be saying, 'bread' or 'milk' or 'tea.' We'll be eating sausages and pretending turkey to-morrow, and I'll walk to the theatre on St. Stephen's Day, us having that same."

She spoke eagerly, as though defending herself from some imputation, for to Mary O'Rourke there was something akin to confession of failure in this acknowledgment that all her brave, lonely struggling for the past six months, all her working and contriving, had led to nothing better than this, that Christmas Eve should find her certainly with a pantomime engagement to commence on Boxing Day, but with a purse so empty that the very commonest pleasures which happier children expect at Christmas time must be denied to the "Family of Three," as their dead father—helpless, feckless, fascinating Edmund Farjeon, the actor—had dubbed his motherless children. Her arm round Teddles held him a little more closely to her breast.

"Is it crying you are, Teddles, my man? Sure, I'm heart-scalded myself."

She broke off abruptly, and the boy, hearing the sudden thickness in her voice, sat up and made a tearful effort to smile at the suggestion.

"It's Sis and baby," he said in a whisper, with a peep across her shoulder at the two small creatures at the fireside engaged in a solemn travesty of motherly business. "I'd have liked Sandy Claus to come to them."

"So would I—fine." Mary sighed and took up her work again. "You'll help me play with them, and they'll forget, Teddles. We'll play house and shop. There was a fine game I did be playing, and me a little one, making a house in the corner with an old newspaper; and you'll be doing all your stunts to make us laugh. It isn't what you've got to eat makes a happy Christmas, or the fine presents you are after getting. The real, true Christmas is a queer, warm feeling in your inside—makes you love

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everyone in the world a bit better because it's Christmas Day!"

Teddles nodded, and presently sat down on the oilcloth at her feet to play with the battered tin engine, sole remaining relic of the last visit of Santa Claus. He played listlessly, since his mind was more occupied with the thought that not only was there never going to be a Santa Claus, but there never had been one at all. His feelings were somewhat those of a grown-up person who hears of the death of a distinguished statesman whom he has never even seen and yet has thoroughly approved—a dignified sorrow. He felt himself made free of knowledge which seemed fitting enough for him at the mature age of seven, but glaringly unsuitable to communicate to little sisters of five and three. If only Santa Claus could have seemed to come to them so that they need not in their turn learn that he never had existed, it would not have mattered so much. For the first time in his life he found himself burdened by the possession of a secret, and he sighed.

His stepsister, at the sound, looked at his little sleek head, and two hot tears trickled down her cheeks on to the woolly frock that she was patching, and might easily have been followed by more, save that the waning daylight was valuable for sewing, not crying. It was really marvellous, seeing that her Irish mother had never taught her such accomplishments, and that almost all her life from babyhood had been spent either as a member or infantile camp-follower of some theatrical touring company or another—a circumstance not likely to encourage domesticity—how deft she was in the manipulation of scissors and thread. Her genius was quite well known among stage folk of the less distinguished sort. Her ability to utilise the most unpromising materials had become a jest against her, and it was affectionately said—though the story was apocryphal—that she once interviewed a manager in an art muslin coat with a fur collar glued on, and got the engagement because she was so smart. The story had its point, for Mary O'Rourke was considered a pretty girl, despite irregular features, because her expression was so sweet; well-dressed, although she was often shabby, because her renovations were so original; and able to hold her own in the world because, being utterly kind herself, she never

expected to meet with anything but kindness from others, and so walked unafraid. The imaginary manager who was deceived by the art muslin coat might have stood for her world, which could never have guessed from the laughing face with which she fronted it that a sudden recognition of what it meant to a girl of five-and-twenty to stand alone as support and guardian, father and mother in one, to three orphan children, had been able to bring the tears to her eyes this Christmas Eve.

There was no rehearsal to-day according to the traditions of the pantomime at the King's Theatre, Shaftesbury Avenue, so after tea the Family of Three was allowed a much extended play-hour. It was when at last little chubby fists rubbing sleepy eyes had advertised the arrival of the dustman at his nightly task, and she was busy taking off tiny garments and tucking up baby and Sis in the cot in the corner of the room which they shared, that Mrs. Rumbolt, the landlady, came panting up the steep stairs to ask that Teddles might "run a herring" for her into the next street. He had never been out alone in the dark before but he begged hard to be allowed to go. The journey did not even entail his leaving the pavement upon which he had started, so Mary herself buttoned him up in his reefer jacket, fearfully and wonderfully made large enough for him by an under-arm piece of her own devising, kissed him, and let him go; and the landlady giving him sixpence with injunctions not to drop it, Teddles set out.

The shop to which he had been sent was quickly reached, but somehow, being out in the dark alone had not proved as exciting as Teddles had imagined it. He decided to go home in the opposite direction, round the block of houses—a much longer journey, but still to be accomplished without leaving the pavement he was on, which had been Mary's strict command. This proved a highly successful venture; round the first corner he came upon a picture palace brilliantly lit. There were lights in the big entrance hall, artificial palm trees, great millboard representations of a well-known cinema comedian leaning back upon their struts inanely grinning, a fat real man in a glorious uniform with a great many buttons, and a long queue of people



Drawn by
Wilmot Lunt.

"The manager bent down and whispered
'Fire away' in his ear"—p. 125.

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waiting to go in as soon as the doors were open.

Teddles stood and stared round-eyed, and the little cold hands in their wool gloves, with which he grasped Mrs. Rumbolt's two pennies change and two rashers of bacon, grew suddenly hot with excitement, because the queue at the picture-palace door had reminded him of something, and from that memory had leaped up in his brain a bright idea. He remembered going to a big theatre in London with Mary, because daddy, who happened not to be as ill as usual just then, was going to act in a new play, and he had been promised that he should see at last what the wonderful place referred to by daddy and Mary indifferently as the "bread and butter shop" and "the theatre" was really like. They had been able to go in and sit in pink velvet arm-chairs at once, because they had a special kind of ticket called "paper," but there had been a lot of ordinary people waiting to go in, and Mary had stopped to call his attention to them, stoutly declaring that no doubt most of them were there solely and wholly because daddy was in the piece. While they watched, a shabby man in a mackintosh had come up and begun to amuse the people, acting and singing and pretending to be all sorts of real grand actors, precisely like Teddles did sometimes at home with daddy, and the people in the queue—who no doubt would have been glad of anything to pass the time away—laughed at him and gave him pennies. Those people outside the picture palace looked dull enough, and nobody was amusing them; why shouldn't he, Teddles, himself be like the man in the mackintosh? He could do the "stunts" that Mary and daddy had taught him; he could sing one or two songs, and perhaps they would give him pennies, and then—might not Santa Claus come to Sis and baby, after all?

With infinite pains and care he screwed the two pennies and the rashers of bacon into the pockets of his marvellous coat; then he climbed to the top of the wide steps where the lights beat down upon his little figure, pulled off his cap, and electrified the people in the queue who were nearest to him by shouting out in a high, childish voice:

"Ladies and gentymen—this is a nim-mitation of the great"—he had been taught

to say "late"—"Sennery Irving in *Ham-a-let*."

The shrill voice carried far, people turned to look, conversation died out.

"It's that kid—bless me if it ain't!" said a man. A woman said something about "a pretty little dear, too."

Teddles Farjeon was not the child of an actor and an actress—who was also an Irishwoman—for nothing; his father's teaching and Mary's had only fostered a natural talent. With folded arms and solemn gait, baby pronunciation and carefully modulated voice, he gave his imitation of the great dead tragedian with the utmost seriousness, quite unmoved by the gaze of dozens of friendly eyes directed upon his performance. When he gravely bowed and one or two people clapped, his little face flushed and grew less strained. Somebody called out, "Go on, little 'un; give us another."

The manager of the cinema himself coming out, after the manner of managers of cinemas, to look at the "house" assembling for the "first performance," prodded the fat man between two of his buttons, and said:

"What's that?"

The fat man with the buttons, being the father of a family himself, was at once apologetic.

"This 'ere little nipper, sir, been singing and a-taking orf actors and actresses just as you see 'em do it at the 'alls, sir. The ladies and gentlemen who's waiting for the threepenny seats seem took with him, or I'd a-cleared him orf before."

"Wait a bit." The manager restrained the buttony man with a large, begemmed hand. "What's he going to do now—Henry Worthy? Why, Henry Worthy and me shared diggings once when I was trying my luck at the legitimate, before Worthy got his start. Let's see how he'll do that."

Everyone in the crowd must have seen, either in the flesh or in the portraits in the illustrated press, Henry Worthy, the popular idol, the best-known man among the younger actors of his day—a man whose work touched so high a level that even the variety artists had been unable to find a mannerism of his to ridicule, an affectation to reproduce. Unconsciously, the more critical of the people who watched little Teddles Farjeon doing his "stunts" that Christmas Eve under the bright lights of the cinema entrance, ex-

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pected that this imitation would prove a failure. It was not likely that a child could reproduce the one and only Henry Worthy.

"Mr. Henry Worthy as 'Philip' in *Captain of Souls*," said Teddles formally; then, conscious of a change in the mental attitude of his audience, he took them into his confidence. "Mary says it's when he's very sad, because he's come home from the war, and with his eyes gone blind on him, and his little baby's mother won't give him a kiss."

Mary had taught him this—Mary, who had never got higher in her art than servants' parts and pantomime fairies—Mary, whom everyone who knew her would have declared was by temperament and brogue alike unfitted for anything approaching tragedy; and yet, allowing for the difference between a child's voice and a man's, the reproduction was wonderfully faithful. *Captain of Souls* had enjoyed a record run; night by night crowded houses had wept at the pathos of the scene where Henry Worthy, as the "Captain Philip" of the play, learns that in giving his sight in his country's service he has also given the happiness in which he had hoped to find the light of his darkened life. If they did not weep, there were certainly very few unmoved among little Teddles Farjeon's hearers.

The manager of the picture palace struck two great hands together.

"Well, if he isn't top-hole! Henry Worthy ought to see that himself—so he ought."

People in the queue were searching their pockets for coppers with which to thank the small performer in a tangible fashion, and the manager, with his hand on Teddles' shoulder, leaped to the requirements of the situation as all great men, including successful cinema managers, do.

"Ladies and gentlemen, don't give the boy anything now." Teddles wriggled under his hand, and looked up with reproachful, blue eyes. "I'm going to ask him to come in and do his whole show over again after the first half of the performance has been gone through. Then we'll have a collection for him round the whole house, and, seeing it's Christmas Eve, ladies and gentlemen, and knowing your kind hearts, I'm sure you'll be liberal."

Under the buzz of general approval he bent down to speak to the child.

"You wouldn't be afraid to do that on

a real stage, would you, little what's-your-name?"

"Yes, I would," said Teddles truthfully.

"Do you mean you won't do it?"

"No; I will do it, only I shall be afraid," and Teddles placidly took the hand the manager offered to lead him in.

The "young lady at the piano" kindly divested him of his coat—Teddles insisting on making sure that Mrs. Rumbolt's twopence and two rashers of bacon were safe before it was hung up—smoothed his hair, and tied over again the black bow under his tunic collar. Then he was given a seat in the front row to watch the "pictures," and got so absorbed in them that he forgot to be frightened until the dark theatre grew suddenly light again, and the manager led him up a tiresome flight of steps and made a speech which Teddles did not hear, because he was busy wondering whether the bright little lamps all along the front of the stage were really only candles, after all.

The manager bent down and whispered "Fire away" in his ear, and Teddles came back to the present with a start, to find himself the only person on a great big stage, with "the young lady at the piano" and some men, holding fiddles and things, staring up at him out of a hole in the ground like the Polar bear has at the Zoo and isn't supposed to get into, and behind them faces and faces and faces which all looked white. He found that he had quite forgotten everything he had ever learned; and then the people with the faces began to clap, and it all came back again.

"Ladies and gentlemen," he cried in his high, clear, childish voice, "this is a mimimutation of the great Sennery Irving in *Ham-a-let*."

After that everything was quite easy, only when he had finished "Henry Worthy" in *Captain of Souls*, the people didn't clap a bit, and, when they did, they went on and on, and the manager came and told him to do it over again.

"Didn't I do it right?" asked Teddles, and the people laughed and told each other what he had said, and clapped all over again, and it turned out that he had done it so well they wanted to have it twice.

At the end the manager made another speech, and took him away into a room at the back of the stage; and presently two

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"The stranger drew a deep breath, and his face went suddenly red"—p. 128.

Drawn by
Wilmot Hunt

boys with buttons, who were probably, Teddles reasoned, the children of the very grand buttony gentleman who stood at the front door, brought in two dinner plates with money in them, and the manager counted it over and said:

"One pound eighteen and sixpence half-penny—two quid near enough. Here you are, young gentleman," and he gave him two little gold moneys, and told him to take care of them. Then Teddles had to tell his name and where he lived, and the piano young lady got out of the bear pit and kissed him, and everyone wished him a happy Christmas and he went home.

He burst in upon Mary, still sewing, now by the light of a candle shaded so as not to disturb the little ones in the cot in the corner.

"Where do you think I've been?" he asked in the whisper they always used after the little ones were in bed.

"In Mrs. Rumbolt's kitchen after watching her make mince pies," said his stepsister, and, catching sight of his

triumphant face, stopped in her work to look again.

Teddles opened a little gloved hand and let two sovereigns tumble into her lap.

Mary forgot the babies to the extent of a tiny scream, and, when she had heard the whole story, caught him in her arms and wiped her eyes upon his marvellous coat in a most unconventional manner.

Needless to say that "Sandy Claus"—or "Teddles Claus," as Mary called him—came for Sis and baby that Christmas Eve, leaving gifts of great magnificence, and, to all appearances, did not neglect their brother either, since a toy pistol and a drum such as his heart had yearned for were Teddles' share of the spoil. The Christmas Day sausages appeared merely as trimming to a real chicken, and there were sweets to eat and cake for tea. Altogether it was a beautiful Christmas, and, as Mary put it, so unexpected. It made them all excited, and the fact that the pantomime opened on the evening of Boxing Day kept the excitement going.

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Mary O'Rourke was a fairy this year, and the children already knew her part as well as she did herself, for it never entered her bright head—which she tried vainly to make fashionably smooth—to keep the children ignorant of her affairs.

It was not to be wondered at, then, that on the evening of Boxing Day, baby and Sis, already put to bed, got up and clung to the rails of their cot, chubby and adorable, in white flannelette nightdresses, or that Teddles, though he gave his solemn promise to Mary that he would undress as soon as she had left for the theatre, kept it in the letter only by taking his own time about the preparations for the night. Mary had been telling them about the Wren Boys of South Ireland and their St. Stephen's Day revels, and the small sisters in the cot were impelled to shrieks of delight by Teddles' version of the matter as he paraded about the room in his shirt with an old glove on the point of Mary's umbrella, chanting with a fine indifference to grammar:

"The Wren, the Wren, the king of all birds,
On St. Stephen's Day she was caught in the furze,"

until Mrs. Rumbolt, coming up, put an end to the performance and, on retiring, left the door open so that she might hear any future outbursts from her lair in the kitchen.

Presently the front door-bell rang, and Mrs. Rumbolt went puffing up the passage to answer it. A man spoke, and Teddles, sitting up in bed with flushed cheeks, felt almost certain that he heard his own name.

"Yes, he do live here, sir"—he could catch the landlady's reply clearly enough—"but they're all three in bed and asleep by now."

A shrill voice from the banisters interrupted her.

"No, I'm not; nor Sis isn't; nor baby isn't."

The landlady and the man on the doorstep both looked round at the little figure in the shrimp-pink pyjamas standing barefooted at the head of the narrow stairs.

"You'd better go up, sir," said the landlady with a gesture indicative of renouncing for evermore all attempts to look after other people's children, and the stranger accordingly climbed the stairs.

"Are you Teddles Farjeon?" he said with raised eyebrows. He was a tall, pale young man, with sad eyes and a smiling

mouth, and Teddles liked him at once and seized his hand in greeting, nodding assent.

"You're the little boy who acted so well at the cinema here on Christmas Eve?"

"Yes; I had a awful lot of money too!"

"Well, the manager of the cinema—you remember?—he looks like this," and quite suddenly the young man made a face and stuck his overcoat out by putting his hands in his pockets so that you almost would have thought the manager of the cinema had got there himself. "He rang me up, told me what a jolly good turn you did, so I came along to see if you'd do it all over again for me."

Teddles, capering joyfully on his bare toes, led the stranger into the dark bed-sitting-room, kindly warning him not to stumble against the bath, felt by the fire-light for the matches, and thrust them into the stranger's hand.

"You just light the gas, or you won't be able to see, not properly. It's up here!"

But the young man, though unconventional enough, naturally boggled at so making free with another person's abode.

"Won't you tell your mother I'm here?"

"Haven't got a mother."

"Well, your father."

"Daddy's gone to heaven—so has Sandy Claus."

The stranger stifled a laugh in the darkness, and suggested that Teddles did not live alone.

"No; course not! There's baby and Sis over there in the cot. Can't you see them? They're both staring at you. And Mary's gone to the pantomime. Please light the gas."

The stranger, after some fumbling, complied with his request, and the flaring light, illuminating the room, showed him the little ones in the cot sitting up to stare at him solemnly with blinking eyes, the crumpled bed from which Teddles had just escaped, Mary's pink dressing-gown with its feminine frills spread over the foot to make it warm enough, the shabby arm-chair by the fire, and the litter of garments and toys everywhere, typical of Mary in its disorderly daintiness, and by no means lessened by Teddles' emulation of the Wren Boys' activities.

"You sit down in the big chair and I'll do all my nimmitations—every one."

The stranger having accepted the invita-

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tion, the boy began according to his wont with "Sennery Irving," baby staring with an occasional chuckle, five-year-old Sis now and then exhibiting a desire to join in, which Teddles discouraged in a stern aside, the stranger, with his arms upon the elbows of his chair, his locked hands against his lips, watching him with his tired eyes. When "Henry Worthy as 'Philip' in *Captain of Souls*" brought the entertainment to a close, and Teddles, having bowed, stood, a little abashed by his silence, scraping the carpet with a bare toe, the stranger seemed to wake himself up from a dream.

"Who taught you that?"

"Daddy did, and Mary."

"Who taught you to do the piece from *Captain of Souls*?"

"Mary taught me that."

"I suppose Mary—your Mary—must have seen me a great many times—seen the play, I mean—seen Henry Worthy?"

Teddles, at his case now, swarmed up on to the stranger's knee.

"Why, yes, she went once, and then she wanted to go again awfully, and we sold the rag woman a lot of things, and that wasn't enough money, so we took jam-jars back to the shop. But it's a very long time ago, when we lived at the other house."

"And is Mary your nurse? She must be a clever girl."

"We haven't got no nurse." The scorn of Teddles' double negative was almost tearful. "I'm seven years old, and I know all about Sandy Claus like a real grown-up person, and I'm Mary's brother."

"I beg your pardon. It's a very pretty name—isn't it?"

In some way which he did not quite understand, Teddles found himself offended that Mary should be taken for anything but what she really was; it made him feel uncomfortable and lonely, and just a little cross with this strange gentleman who had seemed till then so friendly. He wriggled down from his knee, padded across the room on bare, rosy feet to the chest of drawers, pulled a top drawer open, and, standing on tiptoe, took out a photograph. It was one of those which, for professional purposes, Mary found most useful, her true eyes looking out from under the loose curls of her bright hair, her lips drawn apart in that smile whose sweetness, like a light irradiating her face, made you forget that her nose

was nondescript and her mouth too wide. He carried it over to the fireside and thrust it into the stranger's hands.

"That's Mary," he said, and his tone was that of one who successfully clinches an argument.

The stranger drew a deep breath and sat bolt upright, and his face went suddenly red. He looked at the signature in Mary's sprawling hand, written across the corner.

"It is! It is, by Jove—it's Mary O'Rourke. I thought your name was Farjeon?"

Teddles agreed that it was.

"And Mary's father was dead—wait a bit! Of course, her mother had married again. You're the baby she used to talk about. She's your stepsister—that's it, isn't it, Teddles? Hasn't she ever said anything to you about me?"

The stranger so evidently wanted to hear that she had, that Teddles' natural truthfulness was sorely tried.

"I don't know. Were you ever a Wren Boy with the king of all birds and a stick and tins and things to make a noise on, going round the houses in Ireland on Boxing Day? I'm sure she told me about you if you did that."

The stranger laughed.

"But she went to see me twice in *Captain of Souls*, and took jam-jars back to the shop to do it!" Apparently the thought pleased him. "Do you think I may wait here, Teddles, until she comes home?"

"Yes, and I'll sit on your knee and you can tell me stories."

"Oughtn't you to go to bed?"

"She promised if I did go to sleep she'd wake me up and tell me all about the pantomime. She won't be cross!"

Accordingly the stranger, looking round for a suitable garment, wrapped Mary's pink dressing-gown round the boy and took him on his knee. The little girls in their cot, tired with a day's play, cuddled down under their crumpled bedclothes, and there was an unexpected silence.

"Your inside engine is making fearful jumps against my ear," Teddles said; and by and by, with his cheek against the man's rough overcoat, he fell asleep.

The man, sitting very still, with his eyes on the fire frugally banked with small coal, the unaccustomed weight of the child's warm body pressing against him, turned

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his thoughts back to the past, and the smile upon his lips began to lighten his sombre eyes. Once he spoke to himself, and if Teddles had been awake to listen he would have heard him say, "God bless her!"

Mary, coming home from the theatre aglow with that exhilaration which a successful first night communicates even to the meekest member of the company, pushed open her door, wondering at the lighted gas, and, being already excited beyond the expectation of merely ordinary happenings, did not scream or faint when a man got up out of the chair by the fireplace and stood looking at her over a pink bundle, which was Teddles, clasped in his arms.

"Does he ail anything?" she began; and then, "Why, it's Harry! Glory be to goodness, Mr. Worthy himself!"

She drew closer to him, and seeing that conventional greetings were out of the question, put a kind little plump left hand, with its needle-roughened forefinger, upon his arm.

"You're not cross with me for waiting, Mary?"

The man's eyes were watching her very intently, despite his smiling mouth.

"Cross—and you such an old friend? Just be popping that youngster down here"—she held

back the bedclothes as she spoke—"and I'll show you is it cross with you I am."

He laid the child down, who moved in his sleep, rolling his little dark head into a more comfortable position upon the pillow. Worthy straightened himself after the weight of his burden, still watching the girl as she drew the bedclothes up with motherly capable tenderness.

Mary went over to the cot and then to the fireplace, where she stood looking at him

with a smile as though approving some change in him, while she shed coat, hat, and handbag into the arm-chair after her usual habit.

"Fancy now himself so great and famous, and not looking it at all—not a mite of fur or a diamond stud on him! And he hasn't grown fat! Cross! What way



"Do you mean it wasn't true—you still do care—you'll marry me?"—p. 130.

Drawn by
Wimot Ltd.

would I be cross with you, Mr. Worthy, at all?"

Worthy followed her and waited, fronting her still, watching her face as though he hoped to read something there which he might learn in no other way.

"You might be cross with me," he spoke in a low voice, "for being such a fool."

"How was that?"

"Being such a fool as to think you treated me badly when you wouldn't marry me. I

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was only young then, and a selfish little brute into the bargain. I'd loved you from the day I saw you. When the tour was over and I told you I couldn't let you go, and you admitted it wasn't that you didn't care for me, but talked about your duty to your mother and the little stepbrother, I thought it was just a way of putting me off—that you didn't love me enough to rough it with me. I—I have been cad enough to be glad I made good"—evidently he did not enjoy the confession, for his voice hardened—"because you would know that it wasn't such a poor sort of future I was asking you to share with me after all."

"And how"—the blue eyes had darkened, losing their mirth—"would the future be looking now, that same, if I'd taken you?"

He caught eagerly at her words.

"That was it—you wanted me to be free?"

"And who wouldn't, and you with the real talent standing out all over you? I was watching to see you get to the West End theatres and make a name, and it does be taking all there is in a man to do it. You'd not have gone far with me and the Family of Three and my poor little mother and Edmund Farjeon, the greatest child of them all, holding you down."

His grave face grew wonderfully tender. He held out his hands, saying her name in a whisper.

"Mary, couldn't you go back to those days and begin all over again? Mary, the old reason's done with now. I've made more than I shall spend—couldn't you change your mind and marry me after all?"

She shook her head and stooped suddenly to poke the fire.

"It's a grand way you're after finding, Harry, for helping me care the Family of Three." She laughed at her own words. "I wouldn't say it isn't kind of you, but I've outgrown loving and marrying and all those things—it feels like I'm too old for

it. There'd be a romantic bride for you. Why, I'd spoil the honeymoon wondering had baby got her cod-liver oil into her—good luck to it!" She rose, and turned on him sharply with an appealing hand. "Don't let's speak another word about it; I'm sick to death with the talk there is of marrying. Leave it alone!"

Worthy was silent for a moment with set lips. Then he took the little appealing hand into his own.

"That's done with, then! If it vexes you, we'll drop it, but you're going to let me have a look in with the Family of Three? We'll share the responsibility if we can't share anything else?"

"There'll be holy war—people talking us over if you do!"

"I can't help that. I've paid for the privilege, loving you all these years!"

There was a sudden passion in his voice that brought her eyes, wide with wonder and a flickering hope, up to his pale face. She drew a deep breath.

"You're quite set on helping care these children?"

"It's all I have to hope for now, Mary—that you'll let me be your friend."

As she watched his face her own softened, glorified by her smile.

"Faith, then it wasn't a charity commissioner you were after offering me?" Her voice trembled between tears and laughter. "Oh, my dear, dear boy, if I'm feeling old, isn't it with the way every year does be ten to me since I sent you away? It isn't fair at all to bring my burdens into your life; but if you will have the Family of Three, maybe I'd better be coming, too."

He looked at her, hardly able to believe his ears.

"Do you mean it wasn't true—you still do care—you'll marry me?"

At the strange, new note in his voice Teddles in the bed behind him stirred in his sleep.

"With a heart and a half," said Mary, and hid her face against his coat.



WHAT THE WAR HAS MEANT TO ME

A Series of Real Life Stories

II.—My "Society" Friends in the Shell Shop

By A FACTORY GIRL

BEFORE the war began I was a tin-box maker, not earning much. War has made such a lot of difference to me that I thought I'd like others to know about it, and I have written up my experiences, asking a friend who was longer at school than I was myself to go through my paper and see that it's all right.

I'm twenty-two now. I've been earning my living for close on ten years. And whatever people may say about poverty being ennobling, well, all I say is, Ask those who are poor. I reckon you won't get a girl who works ten hours a day in a stuffy factory at thirteen shillings a week to say much about the beauty of being poor. I don't say I was unhappy. We get our pleasures the same as anyone else. But it made me bitter just to think of all the women in the land who had such wealth and possessions without ever having to work for it. You see, that's how we in the East End judge our fellow-workers.

If you see a girl come out on Sundays with a new feather or a blouse that doesn't look as if it had been bought in Commercial Road, why, if you know what she's getting, you just say, "Well, she's earned it, hasn't she?" And with-

out bothering much about the right and wrong of it, you do get a bit angry when you see another girl, who's earning hardly anything, come out in great finery, because you know that—well, she hasn't earned it. So whenever we did think about Society women at all—and I can tell you it wasn't half so often as some people would think—it was with a kind of pity. I guess we despised and pitied them a sight more than they pitied us. Only, deep in some of our hearts there was a kind of smouldering anger that they should have such good things without a day's work, while we had to work hard overtime for any extra pleasure we wanted.

"East is East, and West is West," applies

just as much to London as it does to the whole world. We lived in such a world of our own, we were so engrossed in it that we hardly ever troubled to think what the other world was like. We just went on, working, playing a little sometimes, going to bed and getting up, having three-penn'orth of the "pictures," or a night out with our young man, and to work again, and in all our hearts was a hope that some day we'd find a decent fellow earning decent money so that we could

YOUR STORY WANTED

O

Readers are invited to contribute to this series of true life stories. What I want is the narrative of how the War has affected *you*—a story simply told, without embellishment. I do not want your opinion of the War, nor the experiences of others, but just "What the War has Meant to Me." I will pay Five Guineas for every story accepted. MSS. must not exceed 3,000 words in length, and must be sent in time to arrive not later than December 1, addressed to

"The Editor,
THE QUIVER,
La Belle Sauvage,
London, E.C.,"

and marked "Life Story."

THE QUIVER

get married and have a home of our own.

Well, the war came. I don't know how it was, but even when I knew war was declared I never guessed it would mean fighting. I thought that it would just frighten Germany, and that she would give in, and that it would all be forgotten in a month. Sounds silly, doesn't it?—but there it was. Within seven days of war in our street alone nineteen young fellows went off and enlisted. Mine—his name is Jim—was amongst them. He looked fine in his uniform, and I felt so proud of him. But when he went off there was a blank in my heart and I felt ashamed because I could do nothing. I saw in a picture-paper one day a photograph of a lovely woman—a duchess, she was, I think—who was going to Brussels with a hospital. And then I did feel real envious, because she could do something real for her menfolk, and there wasn't a thing I could do for mine. I think we all felt it in those early days. Every day the papers told us that Lady That and Countess This was opening out a hospital for the wounded, and it looked as if even in war-time there was no use for the girls of the East End. Then one day someone came along to our house and said: "They're wanting new hands down at — for munitions work."

Well, I'm fairly handy about the house, but I didn't suppose that they'd have me at munitions. However, I went along one night after work and saw the foreman, and he looked at me and asked me one or two questions, and then said, "And when can you start?" That took my breath away, and I mumbled something, and then said I could come in a week, so he engaged me there and then provided I could give satisfactory references to say that I was of British birth. Well, the vicar down at the little church near us had known me all my life, and he gave me a letter, and I gave notice at my works, and a week later I went to the big factory, and was given a pass with my name on it, and that's how I started my bit of war work.

There's been so much written about all that has to be done before a shell can be turned out perfect that I won't give any details about the work itself. It was hard, but, oh, it was interesting. Why, making tin boxes—who cared twopence about them?

I used to get through the work somehow, but I hated it, it was so dull. But the moment I began on munitions it was different. Whenever I felt tired and a wee bit inclined to be careless, I used to remind myself that the better I did my work the more it would help our fellows at the front. It was just glorious to feel that my work was wanted. Fancy me, who had been making boxes, now doing something that mattered to England! It is that thought that has kept me going all the time. And it is that thought that's keeping thousands of women going who would never be able to carry on if they didn't know it was to end the war all the quicker.

Well, I had been on munitions about six months when suddenly we heard that a party of Society ladies were coming down to work with us in the shell shop, as we call it. I can tell you all of us were mighty angry. We had been a happy little party in our corner of the factory. We all knew each other. We didn't want any strangers, least of all ladies who were coming down just out of sheer curiosity.

"Tell you what," said Lizzie, who was our ringleader in everything, "I vote we just ignore them. Anyhow, you just wait and see; they'll stick it for a day and they'll go. Just listen to Her Grace—" Oh, my dear, I couldn't touch an oil machine like this; why, it would spoil my hands, and what would the dear Duke say?" and she mimicked the ways of the Society woman, and we all laughed.

No; we didn't want them. We thought it would have been more decent if they had kept to the West End, and we couldn't understand why our employers ever thought of allowing them to come. It would only disorganise work, and we might lose time, and so money, over it, and we were all resentful and annoyed. We hated to be looked at as if we were curios, and that was how we felt the women from the West End would regard us.

Next day a new worker came to the machine next to mine. I knew by her hands—they were as white as milk—that she was a lady. She had on a blue overall and a blue cap like the rest of us, but she wasn't one of us. She said "Good morning," and I muttered a reply, but I didn't look at her. I felt a little ashamed after, because I noticed when she took her cap off after hours

WHAT THE WAR HAS MEANT TO ME

that her hair was all grey-white. Still, that didn't make me forgive her, and I didn't expect for a moment that she would turn up next morning. But she did. And again she said "Good morning," and this time I was a bit more civil.

At the end of the day I had changed my opinion, about this one, at any rate. I saw once during the day that she was very nearly fainting, but she didn't cave in. She stuck it, working all the time, never looking round, but pegging away as if her very life depended on it. I think she must have felt a bit strange, because she looked a little funny, but she didn't say anything more to me.

Next day, just as were going in after dinner, I saw someone having a long argument at the gate with the watchman. He wouldn't let her in, but he came up to me and said, did I know where Lady — was working? I said I didn't, but he'd better ask the timekeeper; so he did, and just after I'd got to work again the forewoman came along and spoke to the little lady next to me, and handed her a telegram. I couldn't help but see, because she read it and gave a little cry, and the paper floated on to my machine, and I saw what it said: "Regret to inform you that your son, Lieut. —, was killed in action on — 18th."

I gave a start myself, and I could have cried, I felt so sorry for the poor soul. The forewoman helped her out of the room, and I said to myself, "Well, we'll never see her again."

Five minutes later she was back. And she put in the hardest piece of work she had ever done that afternoon. When we finished I caught sight of her outside, where the person was waiting, and I went up to her and said, "Excuse me, but, oh, I would like you to know how sorry I am—and what we all think of you; why, we think it was just splendid of you to go on."

She looked terribly ill and her voice was all shaky, but she said, so nice like:

"Thank you very much. It was my son. He wouldn't have felt very proud of his mother if she'd left her post—because of the wire."

And then I heard someone say, "Come along, my lady, please, or you'll be ill," and she went away. And I began to think a few things. The forewoman told me that she was a rich lady who lived in London, that her husband was at the war and her

only son was killed, and that she felt she must do something to help. She knew something about driving and mending a motor-car, and she thought she might be useful in a munitions works, so she gave up her lovely home to come and work with us.

Well, I thought that a woman who could go on with her work after hearing her only son was dead, just because she thought she ought to, was a sight better than many of us could have been. I thought I was sticking in, but if my Jim had been killed I couldn't have done what Lady — did; I know I couldn't. And I began to wonder if I had been all wrong in my thoughts on Society women.

And she came back the next day, and she is still there, working away so bravely, and, for all her hair is white, doing such a good day's work. We all love her, and we wouldn't hear a word against her. And when one of the women in our shop lost her boy at the front, Lady — went to her and comforted her, just as no one else could have done. I heard after what it was she had said:

"There isn't so much difference between us, after all, is there? You have lost your darling boy and I have lost mine. And there's nothing can comfort you; and, for all my money, there's nothing can comfort me. We are just two women whose best has been taken away, and we can only say 'Thy will be done.'"

And Mrs. — told me that her ladyship had sent down all sorts of delicacies for little May, and that she was sending the little brother to a good school. No; I wouldn't hear another word said against Society again.

What I mean is, that there's good and bad in all classes. There are girls in our street I wouldn't like to be seen with, and I dare say there are women with titles who aren't what they ought to be. But I do see that it's just as wrong to say the rich are all bad because they're rich, as to say the poor are all bad because they're poor. One thing I do know is this: that there are not harder workers than some of the Society women in our shop. They spoil their lovely hands, and their complexions go all funny, and there's no one to admire them, and they just go like any of us, working ever so hard and giving up their wages to one of our funds. And they're so pally

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when you get to know them, and they like us and say such nice things about our work, and tell us how we are winning the war, and they never say anything about what they do themselves.

You see, we who had to work for our livings knew how desperately hard the work could be at times. We knew that to these untried workers it must be almost unbearable. Yet they never flinched. Right through the heat of the summer they went, just going to bed as soon as ever they got home, and getting up in the morning very early so that they should never be late at work.

I don't think that after the war we shall be afraid to go and see our titled friends.

After all, whether rich or poor, whether one is a lady or not, the same kind of sorrow comes to us all. Being a lady doesn't mean that one's boy is going to be safe out in France. And if our men at the front think so well of their officers, why shouldn't we at home think well of the officers' ladies? Why, even my Jim, when he came home on leave—and he who used to be a great speaker and Socialistic and argue against the rich—why, even he's changed his mind. He'd learnt something in the trenches, just as I'd learnt something in the munitions work at home. God knows I'll be fit to break my heart with joy when the war's over, but it has taught me things that I'm a better woman for knowing.



"DEAR LORD, WHO CAME TO BETHLEHEM"

DEAR Lord, who came to Bethlehem,
An Infant of an hour,
And now doth wear the diadem
Of universal power,
Be born anew; proclaim again
Peace and goodwill to warring men.

Dear Lord, whose Star the wise men saw
Rise in the darkened east,
And following found, with gladsome awe,
A Prophet, King, and Priest,
Show us that still the way to Thee
Leads straight to joy's nativity.

Dear Lord, who holdest in Thy hand
The destinies of Earth,
Give by Thy grace to every land
A new and gracious birth,
That men may know the manger-shrine
Than pomp and pride is more divine.

A. B. COOPER.



"All the woods
Gleam with a mellow splendour, where the gold
Vies with the purple and the crimson glory—
The sunset of the year."
T. BUCHANAN READ.



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Our New Serial Story

A CASTLE TO LET

by

Mrs. BAILLIE REYNOLDS

SYNOPSIS OF FIRST INSTALMENT

Camiola France, on reaching the age of twenty-one, comes into her fortune, and decides to give up her home in South Kensington and make a tour round the world with her friend Irmgard Maldovan, and Miss Purdon, her companion and chaperon. However, Irmgard's mother falls ill, and Irmgard has to return to her native place—a little spot in Transylvania. Camiola decides to accompany her there, and they duly reach Ildestadt.

CHAPTER IV

THE MEDIEVAL CITY

THE motor slid smoothly along the good wide road bearing Camiola France and Miss Purdon ever upward, though by almost imperceptible degrees, from the hamlet of Szass Lona to that walled city

of Ildestadt described by Murray as "probably unmatched in Europe."

They had just left Irmgard in the bosom of her family, and the shadow of the Maldovan anxieties still lingered over Camiola and wrung her tender heart.

So far the scenery was disappointing. Irmgard had spoken truly when she said

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THE QUIVER

that Szass Lona was not a specially beautiful place. It was a scattered village of the Alpine type, and lay in a wide valley, traversed by a river the waters of which were almost obliterated by the stoniness of the bed over which—one might almost say, under which—it flowed.

In the direction of Ildestadt the prospect facing them as they travelled was bounded by a bare grassy hillside, in appearance not unlike Carnedd Llewelyn, as one approaches the Nantfrangcon Pass from Capel Curig. It was only at the last moment that they had determined to take Reed and the car with them. The transit had been somewhat troublesome, but they were now rejoicing over their decision, which had saved them six hours in the journey between Hermannstadt and Szass Lona.

General Maldovan was deeply touched by the kindness and generosity with which Camiola had brought him back his daughter, and by her sympathetic entering into his trouble. His wife was by no means yet out of danger, and the various children, of different ages, looked woebegone and as if astray in a world where "Mütterchen" had always heretofore presided. Camiola promised them frequent rides in the car. They had never seen one before—it seemed incredible!

The two ladies had been travelling since early morning, it was now five o'clock, and the sun was beginning to decline westward. On that side the valley was quite open, and the warm light poured upon the swelling slopes of the big irregular grass hill.

Camiola was wondering how they were going to cross it. There seemed to be no road ascending upon its bare flank. Then, as they sped onward, she saw that they were going to slip round it on the farther side, between it and a huge rocky bastion which now slowly came into view. Ere long they had swept with caution round a bend of the road which doubled almost flat upon itself; and the Ildenthal lay before them.

"A-a-ah!" ejaculated Miss France.

High above them, as if it looked down upon them with aristocratic contempt, the little walled town lay like a coronet upon the hillside. It sat, so to speak, in the lap of the hills, which held protecting arms on either side. Behind it, the pine woods went up as far as the tree limit; above that one descried the bare bones of the mountain range.

Far up, where the sun slanted across and

touched them with fire, Camiola saw white towers among the pines. "Look! There is Orenfels," she whispered; why she should whisper she could not tell. "Is it not like the castle of the Sleeping Beauty?"

Seen as Camiola saw it first, in that fair July afternoon, the beauty of the scene could hardly be exaggerated. Below the city the Ildentfluss made an almost sheer drop down to where they now were; and the car shot to and fro upon the windings of the road like a tiny shuttle drawing a silver thread across a woof of green velvet, as the girl thought fancifully—now leaving the torrent far behind, now returning so close that the roar of the water thundered in their ears—now flying off again among the rocks, and presently crossing a mediæval bridge, where a rough-looking toll-keeper took money with glances of interest and suspicion at the dainty car.

Just outside the city gates Camiola called to Reed to stop, that she might gaze down from the last bridge at the leaping, roaring waters beneath.

Three separate cascades met and mingled here in an everlasting turmoil of sound and motion. From shelf to shelf the water leapt, flinging itself headlong with seething and roaring. Lumps of spume were caught by the light breeze and driven against the bushes that clung hardily to the steep—torn and wafted away, gone as soon as seen.

"Reed," said his young mistress, "have you any idea where the railway station can possibly be?"

"It's right down in the valley, miss," replied the chauffeur. "I made it out on the map while you was at Miss Maldovan's, since it's no good expecting a sensible word out of the head of any of these savages. Miss Marston's train is due in half an hour, miss, so I must be quick."

"Yes, yes! Drive us straight to the Blaue Vogel, and then be off as fast as you can."

In a minute they had passed under an archway still provided with spikes for the heads of criminals, and had entered the walled city.

It was easy to see that the inhabitants of this remote place were of a kind peculiar to themselves. There were a good many people assembled in the streets, some of them extraordinarily handsome, and wearing a distinctive national costume. The paved street, without sidewalks, had a dip in the centre, doubtless the ancient kennel

A CASTLE TO LET

wherein the city drainage had flowed not so long ago. The mingled scent of coffee and cabbage water, inseparable from all old Continental towns, met one at the very gate.

The buildings were fine. Grand old houses, with projecting gables and carved large boards, houses which had stood for three or more centuries, lined the route. It was but a small place, and very soon they debouched upon the market square, and it seemed like the culmination of the increasing sense of age and mystery.

In the centre stood a tall thing like a sign-post with caves, under the shadow of which was a dim dark painting. Below, on a shelf, burned a small lamp; and various bunches of flowers, stuck into various pots and jugs, were arranged as votive offerings. It was not market day, so there were but few stalls. To their right was a Stadthaus, its handsome solid masonry showing the industry and capacity of the Saxon townfolk. To their left was the ancient hostelry known as the Blaue Vögel. The landlord stood at the door, and there was quite a little crowd around him awaiting the arrival of the foreign guests. The appearance of the motor caused a mild sensation, such as, before the war, the passing of troops might do in London.

The very faces of the crowd seemed to Camiola's excited fancy unlike any she had seen elsewhere. One old woman, with wide, fixed gaze, drew her attention especially. Their eyes met, and the girl felt her heart beat in deep, slow throbs.

They had a glimpse of a slender church tower along a side street, and heard the soft ringing of the "Angelus" as they came to a standstill at the inn doorway.

Nothing could have been more cordial than their welcome. The place, though very old, was more comfortably arranged than they had anticipated; for, at the time when it was hoped that Ildestadt was to become a *Kur-Ort*, when the new hotel had been built, and the mineral springs exploited, Herr Neumann, the Saxon host, had added to his venerable hostelry such things as he was assured were absolutely necessary to the comfort of the English. The legend, "*Warm und Kalt-wasser Bader im Hause*," was painted up across the front of his inimitable carved gable.

"Oh, might not this be the town of the Pied Piper, just as it is!" cried Camiola. "Do you remember what Irmgard said of his coming up through a hole in a moun-

tain in Transylvania, leading the little German children, and that they are the ancestors of these Saxon people? I firmly believe that legend is true!"

The food, though very German, was exquisitely clean and well cooked. "Anything for a change—even stewed apricots with roast veal," said Camiola with resignation.

Their first care, on arrival, was to ask if any member of the staff possessed a word of English. One waiter, Karl by name, was produced, and the Wirth very good-naturedly allowed him to get into the car and go down to the station with Reed to help him with his orders about the luggage.

Karl's vocabulary was limited, but Reed and he just managed to understand the matter in question, and Marston duly appeared, a couple of hours later, weary but intact.

The moon was nearing the full that night; and later, when alone in her wonderful old room, full of oaken presses, and panels which suggested secret doors, Camiola opened her casement to the silence and leaned forth.

The city lay wrapped in slumber, and the filmy white light spread itself tenderly over it. She could see right across the market square, up a black height which she knew would be pines by daylight, to where the radiance softly shone upon the towers of Orenfels. In one window of one tower a light winked. The caretaker up there kept later hours than the citizens below.

The outlines of the buildings which surrounded the square were etched in deepest black against the light behind. She noted that, almost facing the hotel, but in the corner of the square, on the left side of the Stadthaus, there was what looked like a watch-tower. As far as she could judge, by night, it was far older than any of the other buildings which surrounded it.

Ah, what stories the old town could tell if it had a voice that she could understand! How many travellers had lain down to sleep within these glossy black walls which now sheltered her! How many brides of the Vajda-Maros had ridden in through the old stone gateway! How many times had the passing-bell tolled from the big church for the soul of a dead overlord!

She shuddered with a nameless thrill, a vague stirring of excitement that was almost like premonition. It seemed to her that she was more at home here in this old-world

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place, full of incredible legend, than she had ever felt in Truro Gardens.

She watched a solitary figure—a woman's figure—fitting noiseless from beneath her window, to the dense black shadow on the farther side of the square. When it had disappeared, swallowed in the darkness of the watch-tower, nothing stirred.

Camiola turned reluctantly from the window; and, leaving her casement open to the moon, she cuddled down in her comfortable bed and fell asleep.

Presently she dreamed, and her dream was horrible.

She seemed to be once more standing at the window overlooking the market square, when she saw a movement in the old watch-tower which stood in the opposite corner. Something was emerging from the door which was in the angle of the wall, and as it crawled out of the shadow into the moonlight she saw that it was a creature like a long glossy black snake, but with legs and wings. It crept out into the centre of the square, and, pausing there, raised its head and glared in at her window. Fascinated she stared, and it stared back.

A voice behind her in the room said, "You had better shut your window, hadn't you?" "I think not," she replied doubtfully, and the voice behind cried hopefully, "Then you know how to break the spell?" "I don't know anything about a spell," she answered, puzzled; and at the same moment the glossy black monster slid swiftly along the stones below till it reached the wall of the inn and began to climb up. Now she tried to shut the window, but in vain. It would not move, and in her dream she never thought of running out of the room. She heard the swish of the creature's body, pressed close to the wall as it came up, and then the flat black head reared up in the moonlit square of the window and laughed aloud.

The horror awoke her. She sprang up in bed, trembling with fear, to find the summer dawn illuminating the corners of the room, and the fresh, sweet air caressing her face.

To reassure herself, she slipped from bed and ran to the window. The square lay glimmering in the growing light, and a man, wearing some kind of wooden sabots, clattered past on the cobble stones. The old watch-tower was now plainly to be seen, and as she gazed, the little door, like a postern, from which, in her dream, the monster had emerged, opened, to disclose

the bent form of an aged woman, with a kerchief tied over her hair, who swept some dust from the passage within out into the square. She did not look up, but Camiola had a strange fancy that she was conscious of her presence at the window. She was the old woman whose eyes had met her own in the crowd the evening before. As she crept back to bed she made a mental memorandum to avoid apricots and veal at supper time. She was so tired that she slept again almost at once, and this time dreamlessly, awakening only when Marston stood at her bedside with a tray of tea—real English tea—made by herself over a spirit stove.

"Marston, you are a wonder! You must be so tired," said Camiola, rubbing her heavy eyes.

"I'm never one to sleep late, miss," replied the maid, "and they are early about in this hotel. A queer little place, isn't it, miss? But the folks seem friendly, and when I can say a few words I shall get along well enough. Me and Reed, we got Karl to tell us, as we came up in the car, what hot water is, and boot-cleaning, and what time is it, and so on."



The first day was spent in motoring down to Szass Lona to make inquiries. The General's wife was decidedly better, though far from being out of danger. Still, she had recognised her daughter, and apparently the sight of her had done real good.

Miss France carried off Conrad, a handsome boy of fourteen, and Hilda, a pretty little girl of nine, for the day. They lunched at the Blaue Vogel, to their own great satisfaction, for they were evidently accustomed to a very monotonous life.

On the morrow the news was equally reassuring, and Irmgard was urgent that they should not come at all the following day, but make an excursion to Orenfels, which she knew Camiola was longing to do. She promised to send a bulletin up to Ildestadt by the evening postman, to say exactly how her mother was, so that they might find a message on their return.

The expedition had to be made either on foot or on mule-back, so the landlord was instructed to hire mules. Reed was to accompany the two ladies on foot.

They had to take provisions for the day with them, since Herr Neumann assured them that they could obtain nothing, either to eat or to drink, upon their journey.

A CASTLE TO LET

The day broke in cloudless beauty, and after breakfast they found their steeds awaiting them. They were handsome mules, glossy and well fed, and the harness was so elegant that Camiola remarked upon it.

"How unlike the creatures one gets in Switzerland," she remarked.

"These belong to the Graf von Orenfels, the Vajda-Maros who is overlord of Yndaia," replied Herr Neumann. "He goes up to the castle about once a week in the good weather, so he keeps the mules for that purpose. However, he is very glad to hire them out to me. There have been but few visitors this summer. It is a difficult journey, true—but one is rewarded upon arrival, *nicht wahr*, Fräulein?" He waved his hand eloquently.

"If this place were in Switzerland people would go wild over it!" said Camiola earnestly. "It is like a bit of the Middle Ages."

"Middle Ages! Very good," said the Herr approvingly. "Nothing changes here. Year after year we do not change, and when we tried to change the Saints did not approve. Will you believe, Fräulein, that during the season when the *Kur-haus* was opened not a single miracle was performed by St. Ildemund at his holy well?"

Camiola was surprised. "I thought all the Saxons in Transylvania were Protestants?"

The landlord looked embarrassed.

"Yes—but, yes, Fräulein, that is quite true. There is a pastor and a Protestant Church now in Ildestadt. But we who have lived for centuries in the Ildenthal are not quite like the dwellers in any other valley. The overlord of Yndaia, which now they call Orenfels, ruled over us, even after we joined ourselves to Austria-Hungary. He dispensed the higher, lower and middle justice for centuries. He willed that the old faith should be our faith. Thus it is that in this valley, as nowhere else in all the country, the Roumanians have intermarried with the Saxons. It is not done now. No. But it was done. Bertha Esler, who takes care of the castle of Orenfels, is half Roumanian."

As he spoke he had mounted both the ladies, and Camiola, deeply interested in his talk, begged to know where the holy well was to be found.

It was explained that they would pass it upon the ascent, just above the abandoned *Kur-haus*.

They started in high spirits. Mizpah,

who was anything but fond of mule-riding as a rule, found herself really almost comfortable upon her fine, sure-footed beast; and Camiola could not contain her admiration of the prettily coloured harness and fly-scarers fixed to her steed's head.

The muleteer was a saturnine person, Erwald by name. When introduced to the English ladies, with distinguished courtesy, by the polite Herr Neumann, he had barely acknowledged their kindly greeting. He set out in complete silence, and after asking him two or three questions and obtaining the very shortest replies, Camiola left him alone, and talked English with Reed.

Half an hour upon a good wide path lately made for the purpose of conveying tourists and their luggage, brought them to a small plateau upon which, against a background of black woods, the barrack-like hotel had been erected.

The big announcements, in huge blue letters, across its front—of the *welt-berühmte* nature of the mineral springs, and the quality of the air—had a pathetic look. However widely famed, the advantages of the place had failed to draw the crowd.

Just beyond, where the way once more began to ascend, the path entering the woods, stood a tiny chapel. It was open at its western end, and was large enough to allow of perhaps three persons kneeling in it at once. Close to it stood a stone shrine, with a very ancient carving above it, representing, so far as could be deciphered, a warrior saint, in the act of treading down a serpent, or dragon, which he was vanquishing with the aid of a weapon more nearly resembling a pickaxe than anything else. "Either a pickaxe or an anchor," said Camiola thoughtfully, having dismounted, and gone near to examine.

The chapel was quite clean, and upon the shrine, hanging over the little spring which flowed below it, was a chaplet of honey-coloured banksia roses.

"This is St. Ildemund's Well?" asked Camiola of the taciturn Erwald.

"Ach ja," he responded gloomily.

"It is rather a spring than a well?"

"Ja eben. Eine Quelle."

"Who keeps it so beautifully and puts the garland on it?"

"It is Bertha Esler, who takes care of the castle, *dort oben*."

"She is a good woman," said Camiola admiringly.

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They wound upwards through woods for an hour or more, and then Erwald called a halt. They ate some cake, and he brought them exquisite water from a "Wasserleitung" which flowed in the hollowed half-trunks of great pines, and was, so he told them, the spring which supplied the Blaue Vögel with drinking water.

Soon they went on once more, the way growing steeper and stonier. They were out of the woods and upon the bare mountain side, the path they followed having been hewn in the rocks and paved with large stones which made anything but pleasant walking for Reed. The valley grew narrow, the roar of the torrent drowned their voices, and a great loneliness overshadowed the mind of Camiola.

She had no wish to speak.

Then, turning a corner, they found themselves upon what the Swiss would call an Alp.

Here, on the southern slope of the mountain side, was a level space of grass and flowers.

And here, desolate and impressive in the hot sunshine, there lay before them the Castle of Orenfels.

CHAPTER V

A CASTLE TO LET

THERE was a delicious perfume of new-mown hay, and in the meadow just before them two or three peasants were piling it into little haycocks, while in the shadow of a big rock which cropped up in the middle of the field, a sleeping baby was watched over by a dog, who also guarded a big stone jar and a bundle of food. These peasants all wore the national dress, and were as evidently Roumanian as Erwald, with his broad, flat face and high cheek bones, was Saxon.

Everybody paused in their work and stared as if wholly amazed at the appearance of the tourist party round the winding of the path.

Erwald shouted something in Roumanian, and was answered in apparent disgust by the labourers. He continued his remarks as he approached, and they continued to argue. At last one of the party flung down his rake, moved unwillingly to the place where the sleeping baby lay, took up a coat, into which he wriggled his arms, and turned from the field to walk at the

muleteer's side. He was a young man, not tall, but sturdy like all the peasants of the district, and moving lightly on his feet. He had the regular profile, the dignified bearing, the unconscious aristocracy of his race. He looked at the English ladies with a distinct scowl, which almost made Camiola laugh. She said, however, politely, in her pretty, correct German, "I am afraid we are interrupting your work."

He shrugged his shoulders. "Doesn't much matter," he replied indifferently.

"Why have you called him from his work?" asked Camiola reprovingly of Erwald.

"It is young Esler, Bertha's nephew. It is his place to show the castle," replied Erwald.

"You do not have many visitors?" asked the girl prettily, anxious to conciliate.

"We do not," replied young Esler, not at all as if he regretted the fact. Camiola smiled to herself. There had been a buxom maiden among the haymakers, and she thought she could guess why he was sulky.

They walked their mules up a steepish approach, with buildings upon their left, which looked like stabling and a porter's lodge. Before them stood a huge gateway, closed with formidable iron-studded portals, in one of which had been cut a little door, just big enough to admit a man.

Upon the large gates appeared a notice printed in immense black letters, "*Zu vermieten*."

"To let!" cried Camiola suddenly. "Do they want to let the castle?" Erwald looked blank, and she corrected herself, saying in German: "I was surprised. I did not know that the Graf wanted to let the castle."

Erwald smiled a little grimly.

"I do not think that he will easily find a tenant," he replied, as he held his hand to dismount the young lady.

All this part of the castle was evidently far later than twelfth century. In fact, it was like English Tudor architecture, and reminded Camiola vividly of Haddon Hall. She remembered what she had read in "Murray," of the Vajda-Maros who imported an English architect.

Young Esler turned to the porter's lodge and rang an old jangling bell which hung there. They waited, while Erwald walked the mules a little way down the slope, opened a stable door, and led them in.

The note of the bell died away upon the

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"They started in high spirits. . . . The muleteer was a saturnine person"—p. 141.

Drawn by
A. C. Michael

warm air, and nobody came. Young Esler did not, however, seem perturbed, neither did he ring again. He probably knew that Bertha had some way to journey before she could reach the spot. In her own good time she was heard, pushing up a little sliding shutter, which bore the inscription: "*Eintritt, 1 Mark,*" and handing through a large bunch of keys.

The young man said something to her, and after some demur she seemed to assent. Then he closed the shutter and preceded the two ladies to the little door, which he unlocked, signing to them to enter, and adding a caution to stoop.

They found themselves in a square courtyard paved with big flags, in whose cracks the golden-green moss and tiny seedling ferns found a refuge.

Pigeons with iridescent necks were strutting about, preening themselves in the sunshine. Two sides of this court were Tudor, the other two certainly belonged to the earlier date. On the right, with narrow loophole windows, were the ancient servants' or men-at-arms' quarters, and in the corner the rough, ancient, hoary keep. Facing

them was an early Gothic chapel and the buildings connected with it. To the left, approached by a semi-circular flight of steps, low and shallow, was the main door of entrance, leading evidently, under its Tudor arch, to the great hall.

Climbing roses grew in the sunny, sheltered place, and all was neat and well-cared-for.

"I will first show you the keep," said their guide, unlocking a tiny postern.

It was the first time that Camiola had ever been inside a keep which was not a ruin. The interior of this place had been modified, probably at the time the sixteenth century portion was added, to provide accommodation for a large household.

The windows were unglazed, the walls bare stone, but the floors were sound. The narrow wooden beds, if not as old as the boards, were certainly venerable.

Camiola's eyes were everywhere, yet she felt that she was having only a cursory survey. She intended to know the old place far more intimately before she had done with it. That magic legend, "*Zu vermiethen,*" was dancing before her eyes.

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Would they let for a short period? As short as one summer? she wondered.

The chapel was next seen, all as reverently kept as the little woodland shrine had been. The brass candlesticks were polished, the flowers bright, and the whole place was gay with pictures—a mass of soft, warm colouring, almost Oriental in effect. The visitors noticed more than one representation of the Devil-dragon, or Dragon-devil, of the legend woven into the profuse ornament.

Thence their guide led them out into the terraced gardens, which lay upon the south-west open slope of the hill, and were full of flowers. The honey-coloured banksia rose, whence the garland that hung before St. Ildemund had been made, smothered the wall under one oriel window, and Camiola pointed it out to Mizpah with a smile.

She felt, as she sat down to rest upon a carved stone seat facing a rose-bordered bowling green, as though the one thing she really desired was to have for her own the room with the oriel that looked out upon this scene.

"Why does the muleteer think that the Graf will not find a tenant for this lovely place?" she asked impetuously.

"Because there is no road for motors," replied Esler, standing before her with his bunch of keys. "Ildestadt itself is much out of the way and hard to reach; and even when you have got so far, to ascend hither on mule-back takes many hours. We had an American millionaire, the year before last, who declared he would make a road; but even he was daunted by the cost. His wife said it was not worth it, to come and be buried in such a place. She also feared ghosts."

As he added this information he smiled for the first time, very faintly, showing even, short teeth.

Camiola smiled in response. "Of course, you have ghosts here," she said.

He seemed to fold himself up again in a moment, and replied conventionally, "So it is said. I have not seen them."

"Where are they to be seen?" asked Camiola.

"I shall in due course show you the haunted chamber," he replied primly.

They went indoors. The dining hall was fine, with a minstrels' oaken gallery, and the ancient trestle tables at which the retainers had probably sat at the time of the

first building of the castle. A wide oak stair led up to the drawing-room; and there Camiola just gave a little cry and ran to the window.

This was the oriel—big enough to hold a gate-leg table and a semi-circular window-seat in carved wood—overlooking the sunny gardens and away down the blue valley to the towered walls of the mediæval city.

Faded tapestries covered the walls, faded carpets the oaken floor, the furniture was scanty and stately, the carved chimney-piece bore the date 1561.

"They put in a porcelain stove in the eighteenth century," said Esler, "but the late Graf had it taken away. He thought it spoilt the room."

"Wise man!" cried Camiola.

"It is nevertheless very cold here in winter," was the somewhat crushing comment of the young peasant.

The bedrooms were perhaps the weak point of the house. They were mostly small and dark, and they opened into each other in an inconvenient way. A large family could not have been installed unless one made use of the rough accommodation of the keep.

There were, however, one or two state chambers of better dimensions, and Camiola thought it would be possible to make Arnold Bassett and Neville comfortable. She had gone so far upon the road of her new idea!

Hot water and lighting, she reflected, as she descended the stairs, would be the main difficulties; but labour in that part of the world was doubtless not dear.

As they re-entered the hall they saw that Bertha Esler and Erwald were both there. Bertha had laid a clean cloth upon one end of the trestle table, and was unpacking from Erwald's basket the provisions that Frau Neumann had provided.

"Oh, Mizpah, how nice!" was the girl's pleased exclamation. "You are very good to give yourself so much trouble," she added in German to Bertha.

"The Herrschaften are welcome," replied Bertha very gravely. "It is more wholesome to eat at table than sitting upon the grass."

Camiola was not sure that she agreed; but when it was a question of eating in this wonderful old place, gazing round at the antlers and weapons, and breathing, as it were, the atmosphere of the past, there could be no idea of her preferring to be elsewhere.

"What about Reed?" asked Miss Purdon.

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"Oh, give him his portion and let him go and eat it outside," replied Camiola, putting rolls and chicken and ham together. "You would rather, wouldn't you, Reed? Do you speak English?" she went on, turning to young Esler.

"No," he replied with a flash of resentment, much as though she had asked him, "Do you steal or tell lies?"

She laughed in much amusement. "Reed, you will have to learn German, or perhaps Roumanian, and stand up for your country," said she. "Here is an Anglophobe for you of the first quality. When you drink your wine, lift your glass and cry: '*Es lebe das England! Hoch, England!*' and see what he will say."

The retainers withdrew and left the two ladies to lunch in silence.

Camiola's brain was so busy that she said nothing at all for a long time, but gazed out across the courtyard from the diamond paned window, whose tops were glowing with the heraldic blazoning of the Vajda-Maros. At last she said:

"Mizpah, tell me truly, what impression does this place make upon you?"

"I think it most interesting. There is such a fascination about its being so deserted, so out of fashion as you may say," replied Miss Purdon. "Even the American millionaire sounded wrong. I resented his introduction, though he has been so obliging as to take himself off. You know what I mean."

"Exactly. That is the feeling one has. Of having discovered Ildstadt; above all, of having discovered Orenfels," replied Camiola. "I hardly dare to suggest it—it sounds so wild—but I do feel as if I badly want to take this place for a few weeks. I wonder if they would let it for a short term, or if you think me stark mad to wish to have it?"

Miss Purdon smiled. "Women are curious creatures," she replied, "and I have to own that a week ago I might have thought you foolish to contemplate such a step. You would never guess the reason which prompts me now to think that I should like a move! It is because I do not sleep at all comfortably at the Blaue Vögel."

"Mizpah! But why did you not say so? My own bed is most comfy; I will complain at once—"

"Oh, it isn't the bed. That, as you say, is most comfy. It is something in the atmosphere, either of the room, or the house, or

the town which is—which is—which is—well, not comfy at all."

Camiola did not reply, but her parted lips and eager eyes invited more.

"I have bad dreams," said Mizpah.

"That is the suppers, isn't it?" asked Camiola. "I had a nightmare the first night, and put it down to the menu."

"So did I," replied her friend in a voice which clearly meant that she thought this a mistaken verdict.

"What did your dream?" asked Camiola after an interval.

"My dreams seem always connected with that queer little old house that faces us across the market square—the house with a tower."

"I know," replied Camiola quickly.

"I had a most horribly circumstantial dream of a witch-burning the other night. I hardly know at this moment whether to call it a dream or a vision. There were things in it that I do not think I could have invented. The stake was planted just in front of that shrine, or whatever you call it, where the people put flowers, and the woman was brought on a flat cart. She was huddled together and seemed half dead with fear. Four men held her while she was tied up. It was indescribably awful, but I had to look. When she was fast bound, a messenger ran to the tower house, and there marched out in procession a whole family—father, mother, sons and daughters—and the old man who seemed to be the head of the family had a lighted torch handed to him, and actually set fire to the straw! I woke up kicking, fighting, almost screaming out loud!"

The dignified lady coloured quite hotly as she admitted how deeply a mere dream had had power to affect her.

"It is queer that my nightmare, too, was connected with that house," remarked Camiola. "Mine was not so bad as yours—it was too silly to be really bad. Yours is perfectly horrible."

"It was. I have dreamed, too, of somebody who went into the tower house, and I was told, or found out, that he was never seen to emerge. I dreamed that I stood out there watching, to see whether he would come, and in the darkest part of a very dark night I saw them carry out a dead body. . . . The curious part of it is, that I never remember taking any particular notice of that house while I was awake. There is nothing very remarkable about it."

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"It is quite queer," reflected Camiola. "Anyhow, it is not pleasant to have bad dreams, because, if one goes to sleep in the fear of them, they often come. Also it seems to be setting in very hot, and Hldestadt is shut in—there is no garden to the inn, and the town sanitation is what Uncle Remus would describe as 'powerful lackin'.' I feel as if we should breathe better up here if we can persuade them to let it for a short while."

"You can hardly go away altogether and leave Irmgard in such anxiety," replied Mizpah. "Really yesterday I felt so perturbed in my mind that I was ready to suggest deserting her. This would be a better plan. If we moved up here, you would need to hire mules for us all, and I dare say we might have to put up with minor inconveniences. But we should have the free air of heaven in which to breathe, a garden full of roses in which to be lazy, and we should be out of sight of the tower house, which seems to me to be the centre of the baleful influence."

CHAPTER VI

ESLER MAKES A BANG

HAVING finished their lunch, the two ladies made their way out into the gardens once more, and Miss Purdon sat down upon the stone seat, while Camiola stretched her slim length upon the ground at her feet.

They talked seriously of the plan of becoming for a time tenants of this wonderful place—assigning the bedrooms, discussing the advisability of sending to England for their own servants, and facing the question of baths and hot water.

"After all, hot water is a mere question of fires enough, and kettles enough, and people enough to look after them," said Mizpah.

"And fuel enough—but I should think wood is cheap hereabouts."

"Yes. The one master question, as to a sufficient water supply, ought to be easily answered. There seem to be springs everywhere."

"We shall have to leave the motor in the garage at the Blaue Vogel and let Reed live here with us. He would be too miserable down in the town by himself."

"Yes. I am inclined to think we had better engage our whole staff from here-

abouts, except for him and Marston. Mrs. Blagg would be worse than useless here—pampered London thing!"

"I agree with you," replied Mizpah. "We must have a native cook who will keep house for us, if such a creature is to be had. One would not know the sort of thing you can obtain in such a spot, and the language difficulty alone would make an English cook impossible."

As they talked it really seemed as if the idea, which had first presented itself as a wild chimera, might become practicable with a little study.

After a while the sunny sleepiness of the place made Camiola drowsy. Her voice died away, and for a few minutes she dropped into unconsciousness. She awoke with the start which one sometimes experiences at the idea that somebody is watching. Before her on the grass stood the graceful, well-knit form of the young peasant, Esler, his gaze bent seriously upon her sleeping face. As she sat up, brushing her eyes with her hand, she saw him colour and lower his lids, as though he knew he had been looking at her as a man may look upon a maiden, and not as an inferior at his social superior. The idea rather pleased her, for she had been sensible of a kind of smothered hostility in his former bearing. Her position was, however, a trifle undignified, and, glancing at the bench, she found that Mizpah had strolled away.

Leaping lightly to her feet, she asked, "Is it time to return?"

He looked surprised. "The Fräulein does not, then, desire to see the cavern?"

"Oh!" cried Camiola with sparkling eyes, "I did not know that you had a cavern to show! By all means let us see it. Do you know where the lady is?"

Miss Purdon had not gone far—merely as far as the Renaissance stone balustrade, upon which one could lean elbows and gaze down upon the valley below.

She did not, however, take kindly to the cavern idea. She thought, if Camiola would excuse her, she would remain upon the stone bench and read her book. The chauffeur would look after his young mistress.

Camiola assented readily to this, for Mizpah was not active. Reed was summoned, and the three set out together, retracing their steps to the courtyard, and thence to the postern door of the keep.

Here they found that three tin candle-



"He lit a small piece of magnesium wire
from the flame of his candle"—p. 148.

Drawn by
A. C. Michael.

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sticks with metal backs, each containing a dirty tallow candle, had been placed. Esler gathered them up, carried them with him into the keep, and unlocked a little door in the wall of the lowest room. This done, he lit the candles, handed one to each of his companions, and bade them follow, treading carefully lest the steps were damp.

"Then this rock—upon which the fortress was built—is actually full of caves?" asked the girl, as she carefully descended.

"Full of them," replied Esler. "They made excellent prisons in the early days of Yndaia."

They reached the foot of the stairs, and he unlocked another door. This led them into the very heart of the mountain. For some distance—perhaps three hundred yards, or more—they were in a tunnel which had been artificially enlarged to enable a man to walk upright. Then they came out into a curious place. The candles showed a tumbled mass of boulders all about them, a vertical wall of rock on their left, and to their right a black lofty space, whose top the lights could not illumine.

"Blow out your lights, if you please," said young Esler in his peculiarly gentle tones. "I will rekindle them for you in a moment, but I want you to see a certain effect."

When they had obeyed, raising their eyes at his direction, they saw at a great height upon their right a far blue glimmer, descending in slanting fashion towards them. As their eyes grew used to it they saw that it was a small filter of daylight, and that it entered high above them, and shone down over a slope covered with tumbled rocks and stones.

"That is where the water comes in," went on the clear voice. "In the course of ages it has brought down all these loose rocks that you see. On your left is a solid wall of rock, with only a small outlet at its base. The water finds a way through, but the stones are left behind."

"There is no water now," remarked Camiola.

"Only after rain," he replied tranquilly.

So saying, he relit the candles and led the way on past the great slope of stones.

"Can one go up it?" asked Camiola.

"If the Fräulein wishes, we will go out that way upon our return," he answered, "and regain the castle by a wood-path."

They went on down a tunnel where they had to stoop from time to time. Esler called their attention to the natural arch-

ways which the water had hollowed for itself, and the small circular domes in the roof formed by its swirlings.

Presently a pretty, gentle, murmuring sound made itself heard—the soft singing of water flowing somewhere. Turning a corner, they came upon it. It flowed in a channel about six feet wide, leaving a narrow pathway on one side along which they could walk dry-shod. At the spot where they first saw it, it disappeared under a very low arch into the rock.

"That," said young Esler, "is the stream which supplies the castle. From the place at which you stand to the point at which it emerges from the mountain would take you ten minutes to walk if you walked straight there from here. We once put some colouring matter into the water at this point. It was an hour and a half before it came out at the other end."

Camiola, deeply interested, translated all the information to Reed. Esler warmed to his work. Evidently this cavern was the great interest of his life. He led them along for about a quarter of a mile by the brink of the purling stream. It seemed hard to believe that this subterranean corridor was natural; but he assured them that it was. Presently they reached the place whence it emerged from the rock as mysteriously as it later disappeared therein.

"You have now," said Esler, "three or four thousand feet of rock above your heads. The echo of a sudden noise just at this spot is very curious. If you will wait a moment, *Ich will eine Erschütterung machen*"—(make an explosion or crash).

He lit a small piece of magnesium wire from the flame of his candle, went a few paces, let it fall upon the ground, and set his foot upon it. "A million horrible bellowing echoes woke," and Camiola, for a moment, felt her heart go into her mouth, though she knew in her inmost being that the young man must be well accustomed to the result of such a proceeding.

She stood very still as the maker of the shattering noise tranquilly reapproached her.

"Was it here?" she asked tremulously, "that the exploring party was lost?"

He turned away as if she had suddenly rebuffed him. "Oh, no," he replied sulkily.

"Then—then the place you call the Gaura Draculuj is not in this part of the mountain?"

He turned and looked at her. "Who

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spoke to you, Fräulein, of the Gaura Draculuj?"

"The Fräulein Maldivan."

"Ach so! The Fräulein is a friend of the Herr General's family?"

"Yes. That is what brought me to Ildestadt."

He nodded, as if such a proceeding did indeed need explanation, and was now plausibly accounted for. "The Gaura Draculuj is a long way from here," he replied, trimming the wick of his candle. Then he raised it above his head. "The height of this cavern, where we now stand, has never been ascertained," he said. "But in spite of its height, this place is very quickly flooded. Several days' heavy rain fills all the tunnel, and it was here that those whom the overlord wished to get rid of quietly were confined. As we return—for we can get no farther in this direction—I will show you the sliding door by which the victim was shut in. It is not a door, but a grating, so that the flood water could eventually escape, but it had plenty of time to drown a man first."

"What fiends they were in those days!" muttered the girl passionately.

"We must remember," replied the young man thoughtfully, "that our modern apparatus of law was not available to them. They made their own justice, and often it was better justice than the kind which is now dealt out by the cartload from the hands of a government which has no personal knowledge of the people's wants."

There was an edge of bitterness in his voice. The girl reflected that, even though he was as she supposed a Saxon, yet he served the true, Roumanian owners of the country. Naturally, her own connection with the Hungarian Government official would not endear her to him.

She smiled rather teasingly at him. "You defend the feudal tyrannies?" she inquired.

"The Eslers have served the overlords of Yndaia for many generations," he snapped, turning as if with a determination to trifle no longer with this foreigner, and striding back along the way they had come.

By the time they reached the large cavern with the slope of loose stones he had regained his good temper, and he was very courteous and capable, holding the candle to show the girl a kind of faint track,

worn among the rough fragments, which wound to and fro upon the difficult ascent.

Light and active, she made nothing of it, and, though he did not presume to speak, she felt that he admired her agility.

They crawled out through the low aperture which admitted the blue glimmer, and as they emerged Camiola thought the world had never looked so glorious, so vividly coloured, in all her life before. They were in a charming little wood upon the mountainside, and the sun was pouring through the light foliage of young larches, and beginning to ripen into scarlet the glossy, slim berries of the barberry bushes which grew here in profusion. The sky seemed bluer than sky usually is, and Camiola sank upon the moss with a long sigh, oddly blent with a smile of delight, recalling to herself the "Ballad of Reading Jail." For a moment the shadow of the prison grate "that slurs the sunshine half a mile" lay upon her spirit, and the prayer for all prisoners and captives took a new meaning.

"How beautiful everything looks," said she slowly.

Reed, blinking at the daylight, grinned sympathetically. "Does seem friendly," he remarked. "Nice lot these foreigners are, seemin'ly, shutting up prisoners to drown like rats in a hole."

"Oh, but that was in the Middle Ages; and we were every bit as bad in England then. Have you never seen that black hole in the Curfew Tower at Windsor, where you were shut up without light, food or air, and just left to die?"

"Glad I wasn't born in those times, miss," was the contented reply.

Esler suddenly knelt down in the moss at her feet, and, with a murmured "Excuse me," took a bit of her skirt in his hand. Glancing down, she saw that she had allowed a shower of grease from her candle to fall upon the tweed. The young man drew a knife from his pocket and carefully detached the dry tallow, she watching him the while in a fascinated way, pondering his quiet self-possession, which she found attractive. When he had removed the last fragment, he produced a clothes-brush and removed the dust from her hems.

She thanked him, smiling, as she rose from the ground, but he was leading the way and seemed not to hear.

They soon made their way down the hillside, and their guide admitted them into

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the castle through a tiny door which led into the chapel sacristy.

They found that Erwald had saddled the mules and that Mizpah was awaiting them, making somewhat laborious efforts to converse with Frau Esler, who seemed extremely reserved.

Camiola, with a word of graceful thanks, put a gold piece into the woman's hand, and gave another to young Esler. He was standing, cap in hand, to see them depart, and when she gave him the money he looked at it, flushed, and, glaring at her resentfully, tendered it back. "I have no change," he said; "the charge is five marks—one apiece for seeing over the castle, and one apiece for the *Höhle*."

Camiola felt uncomfortably hot. She had once previously found herself in a place where the natives were too proud to accept tips, and she did not wish to hurt his feelings. "The rest is a present for you to remember me by," said she pleasantly, "and I may give you more trouble before you have done with me. I hope to come here again this summer."

"Again?" he asked, as if much surprised. "There is no more to see." He spoke very earnestly. "No more at all."

"But do you think one can take in everything by just seeing it once?" she inquired. "I cannot. I have not half satisfied my curiosity about this fine old place. No, no," she added, embarrassed, as he still made as though to reject her gift. "I have taken you from your work, yes, and"—slyly—"from your friends also during all the best part of the day. You must let me repay you for so much time and trouble."

He fell back and dropped his hand from her bridle; but as she rode away she felt that he was not pleased, but, on the contrary, really annoyed and humiliated. This stung her, for she did not like having made a mistake. She felt inclined to tease him, and as she rode away she turned half round in her saddle, crying with much meaning: "*Auf wiedersehen!*"

His blue eyes flashed, and he answered without hesitation:

"*Leb' wohl, gnädiges Fräulein!*"

She was half laughing, half angry, as she turned the corner into the wood, leaving the enchanted castle behind. But the

thorny nature of these peasants, so difficult of access, so unapproachable by means of the appeal of the pocket, pleased her. The natives seemed as much out of the common as the house itself.

Herr Neumann was at the door when they rode, a couple of hours later, into the market square, and waved his hand in cheery welcome. While helping them to dismount, he made many inquiries as to what they thought of the castle, the fine building, the prospect, and so on. He seemed much gratified and a little astonished at the fullness of their admiration.

"Have you any idea," asked Camiola, "of what rent the landlord asks for the castle, and whether he would let for a short period?"

The landlord laughed comfortably. "What! The *hochwohlgeborene* thinks of becoming his tenant? And what then will she do with the so-convenient little automobile?"

"That will have to stay with you, Herr Neumann. When I want to use it I must come here to fetch it, and probably sleep a night in Ildestadt or elsewhere. I think that would answer very well."

"Oh, yes, yes, certainly that could be managed." He looked as though the idea that she was speaking seriously had only just occurred to him. "Well," he went on, as if reflecting, "and why not? The gracious one is doubtless rich, as the English are known to be, and she will see that it costs something to get provisions and fuel carried up the mountain side?"

Camiola shrugged her shoulders. "I do not know about being rich," she replied, "but I am out for a holiday, and if I choose to spend part of it in a baronial castle, I am willing to pay a fair price for my pleasure."

"Well, then," replied the host, still turning over the idea in his mind, "you had better call upon the Graf and make your application to him in person."

"Certainly. Where does he live?" asked Camiola eagerly.

The man made a gesture with his hand. "Over there, Fräulein, across the market square, in the house with the watch tower."

Mizpah and Camiola looked at each other.

[END OF CHAPTER SIX.]

SIR TIMOTHY'S CHRISTMAS EVE

By
D.H. Parry



"Mr. Hardman to see you,
Sir Timothy"—p. 152.

Drawn by
C. E. Brock.

ODDS life, the whole world seems to have conspired against me. Caleb Hardman a good two hours late, and now this plaguey thing won't draw. What's wrong with the pipe?" and Sir Timothy Tarrant, West India merchant, and Alderman of the City of London, snapped the long churchwarden across his knee and flung the pieces on to the hearth.

There was still plenty of light in the street without, for snow had fallen, and lay heavily on the roofs, powdering the sills and cornices of the houses across the way; but the brown panelled room was already filled with the coming twilight, and there was twilight gloom too in the old man's soul.

The curls of his wig fell on the shoulders of the full-skirted coat, framing the good-matured red face, but the grey brows were puckered into a frown, and the corners of the indulgent mouth drooped after a fashion unusual with the portly alderman.

"And where is that rascal Truelove?" he growled querulously; "making merry

below stairs, I'll wager a guinea, while his old master sits alone with sad thoughts for company!" and with a furious tug at the long bell rope, Sir Timothy lay back in the padded chair.

And the cause of it all was deeper seated than the rebellious pipe stem, or the sharp twinge of gout that made him rest his silver-buckled shoe on the worked footstool.

When the door behind the screen opened softly and a discreet dry cough announced the coming of the old manservant, Sir Timothy turned himself quickly in the chair.

"Candles, Truelove," he snapped, "and draw the curtains close. That infernal snow gives me the shivers. This is Christmas Eve, is it not?"

"Yes, master; it is Christmas Eve," said the ancient servitor with a low sigh.

"Very different from last year, eh, Truelove?" said the alderman with a quaver in his voice. "And Miss Cecily was with us then. I wonder if you and I will be here

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this time twelve months. Deuce take it, the place is like a tomb without the girl."

"'Tis cruel hard," murmured the old servant with a moist eye. "But we are all in the Lord's hands."

"And I wish that scoundrel were in mine, that penniless captain who has robbed me of my daughter and made my old age desolate!" and Sir Timothy flashed a glance at the gilt-handled sword above the mantel-shelf, the sword he had worn as a major in the trained band before increasing stoutness had compelled him to absent himself from the musters at the Artillery Ground.

"I trust those two bailiff rascals below are holding their tongues?" said the alderman, as Truelove shut out the wintry

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Truelove regarded his beloved master for a moment with some alarm as the handsome old face grew purple with passionate indignation, and he was glad for the sharp summons that came upon the front door.

"Mr. Hardman to see you, Sir Timothy," he announced, ushering in the alderman's partner.

"At last, Caleb, and thank Heaven for it!" cried Sir Timothy, turning round. "You see I am chained down by my old enemy," and he pointed to his gouty foot.

"Take Mr. Hardman's cloak, Truelove, and brew a bowl of that Jamaica that we both love."

"Nay, no punch for me," interrupted the new-comer in a harsh voice. "I am away to my place at Myrms for Christmas, and have only stayed my horse in response to your message."

No two persons could have been less alike than the easy-going, good-natured old merchant and his partner, who was a gaunt, tall man with a parchment face and a pinched nose. A blue mantle wrapped his lean figure, and he brought a cold draught from the white world without and some snow on the toes of his riding boots.

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"So my words are true, and your folly has come home to you at last," he said, when the door closed. "This is the result of dealings with your court lords and fine gentlemen against my advice. How



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Drawn by
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SIR TIMOTHY'S CHRISTMAS EVE

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"Zounds!" gasped his listener. "All this will come nigh to undo us, Caleb."

"It certainly would had I been as easy-going and careless of my own affairs as you are of yours," said Hardman with an ugly sneer. "What money have you in hand to meet this claim of Clantyre's executors?"

"Scarce a thousand pounds in ready cash," replied the alderman. "I had trusted to those ill-fated ships reaching port safely—and now I must trust to you, Caleb, until next settling day."

"Not so fast," said his partner with a curious laugh, his ill-favoured face glowing malevolently in the candle light. "There is



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"I will make myself clearer," replied his visitor, setting his legs wide apart and shifting his coat skirts the better to feel the fire. "As you well know, the dearest wish of my heart was for your daughter, Cecily, and my son, Tom, to make a match of it. Your consent was given, and all the City rang with the news of their betrothal, the wedding breakfast was even ordered, and the guests invited. Then what happened?"

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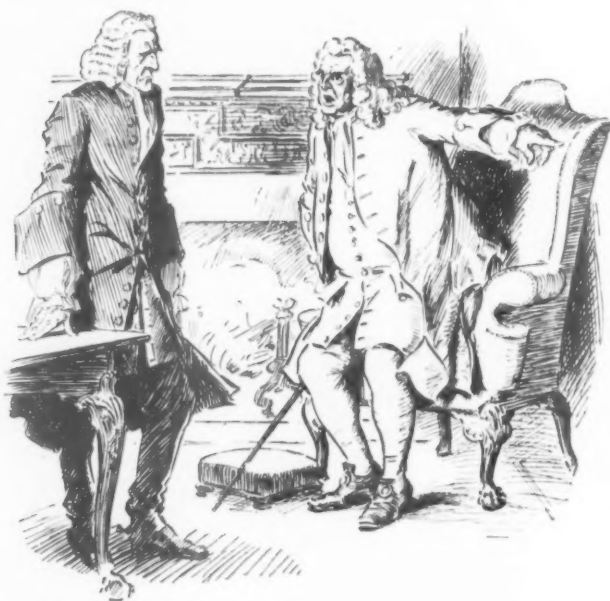
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"I will tell you why; because you were

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to blame in allowing the jade to elope with that mincing jackanapes whose regiment was lying in the Tower, and I have been disgraced in every man's eyes in consequence," snarled his partner. "It was an insult to my boy, and through the son to the father—a common joke made in my hearing that Mistress Cecily preferred a soft man to a Hardman, curse them! Don't interrupt me. The fault was your own, and you know it. It was your duty to have kept a closer eye on the minx, instead of pampering her till her gowns, and her jewels, and her riding horses were the talk of the whole City. I can neither forget nor forgive."

Sir Timothy's face purpled again as he stared at the speaker in blank amazement.

"You are strangely changed, Caleb, from the smooth-spoken man of business whom I raised from the position of head clerk in the counting-house to be my equal partner," he said at last. "What does this mean?"

"That I have grown weary of the partnership, that I have saved while you have squandered, that the present time is a fitting one for us to sever."

Sir Timothy paused a full minute, and rose with difficulty to his feet.

"Then I am to understand," he said slowly, but with a growing dignity in his voice, "that though you know I have the bailiffs in my house, you will not help me in the matter of this temporary embarrassment?"

"I will not help you," replied Hardman with a sneer. "There is no end to the folly of a fool."

"But there is an end to yonder passage, and it leads to the street door!" thundered Sir Timothy. "Last Christmas, in this very room, you and your ill-conditioned whelp enjoyed my hospitality. My poor misguided girl was with us too. Go, before I lay hands on you! Go, and leave the fool, as you fitly call him, to his folly!"

The tremendous voice with which these words were spoken, and the commanding figure of the fine old merchant, robbed the cold-blooded rascal of half his triumph.

"I wish you a merry Christmas, Sir Timothy," he said with an attempt at sarcasm, which somehow failed, and he passed out into the snowy night.

II

"THE hound was right, I have been too easygoing," groaned the unhappy man. "I left too much to that scoundrel's honour, and this is the result. But what is the use of vain repining now? I am a ruined, lonely, forsaken man—and this is Christmas Eve!"

He had sunk into the chair again, crushed by that base ingratitude even more than by his own troubles, which were sore enough in all conscience, and he stared into the heart of the fire until his gaze, lifting to the mantel-shelf, rested on a girl's portrait hanging there.

He was suddenly seized with a violent fit of resentment, for the arch, laughing face of his only daughter who had repaid his lavish tenderness so ill, seemed to mock him, and tearing it down from its nail in the panelling, he rent it with his hands, crushed it, crumpled it, and thrust it, frame and all, on to the blazing logs.

"Why should I grieve and eat my heart out for a slut who has not even had the thought to acquaint me of her whereabouts? Bah, Timothy! 'Tis a true saying that there is no fool like an old fool. I will ring me for a clean pipe and a fresh punch," and he pulled the bell rope violently again.

Truelove entered, looking inquiringly at his master; he had grown grey in the family service, and with the respectful familiarity of a faithful servant, he ventured on a question.

"Will the men be going to-night, Sir Timothy? I was thinking your honour will scarcely wish them about the place on Christmas Day."

"Beggars must not be choosers, Truelove," said his master. "Since I cannot pay them, they must e'en stay where they are. Go, my good fellow, bring me another pipe and a packet of right Virginia, and then leave me to my own thoughts."



Several times without his being aware of it, Truelove peeped in upon his beloved master during the next hour, and the last time he left the door purposely ajar.

The alderman still sat before the fire, the strange hush of the silent house all about him, his thoughts racing down the years that had gone, and always coming back to the same reflection, that he had outlived his



"Surely this is some unseemly jest, my lord," he stammered at last "—p 157

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friends—that he was forsaken and deserted—and that this was Christmas Eve! Of all the dwellings in Austin Friars, his alone was making no preparation for jollity. The distant sound of the joy bells came to his ear from the steeple of a neighbouring church, and once some carol singers close at hand struck up their time-worn ditties. He sighed deeply as he looked at the half-burnt fragments of the frame that lay smouldering on the broad hearthstone, and his daughter's empty chair seemed to reproach him for what he had done.

"'Tis turning very cold," he muttered, half aloud. "Methinks I should be better in bed with a pan of coals and a hot posset," and just then a knock came upon the front door. "Who may that be?" he thought. "Some beggar possibly. I will bid Truelove give the poor brute a coin."

But Truelove did not answer the summons, although it was repeated again and again, a feeble timid knock that arrested the attention by its very persistency.

He got up at last, and went to the door himself, hobbling out on his cane, and, sliding back the little wooden shutter, looked through the grating at the white world.

The snow had fallen heavily, and was banked up in great drifts against the opposite house.

"Who are you, and what do you want?" said the alderman, crossly, for the wind was keen through the grating.

"Father, dear!" said a voice that made him start. "It is I—your undutiful Cecily—for pity's sake don't turn us away!"

For a moment the man stood dazed, and then he gave a hoarse cry as he fumbled with the chain and bolts and drew the heavy door open.

A slim figure muffled in an old cloak and carrying a bundle in her arms crept timidly into the old familiar hall, lit by the hanging oil lamp.

"Dear father," said the girl softly, "I don't know what to say to you, I don't know how to ask your forgiveness, but it is Christmas Eve, and I have brought my baby with me."

"Your what? My God!" exclaimed Sir Timothy. "Into the parlour, girl, while I secure the door," and his hands trembled so violently that it was some time before he had fastened it to his liking.

Then he went in, and found her crouching

before the fire, her head thrown back, and her face looking at him with mute appeal while she held the little bundle out, as if to plead for her.

A man must have had a heart of stone to have withstood her, and Sir Timothy's was a warm heart at all times, even, as we have seen, to his own undoing.

"My little Cecily!" he cried in a broken voice, and drawing her to him, they fell sobbing in each other's arms.

At last he said, and sternly too, "What of that scoundrelly husband of thine? Pray God he is thy husband, child!"

"He is, indeed, and one of the best and truest that ever girl had," she whispered. "I am but his messenger, and he will come presently to ask your forgiveness, on his knees if needs be. And you will grant it, father, for he would kneel to no other man in the world—the King excepted."

"Tut—tut—that's all very well," said the alderman. "They say the rats leave the sinking ship, but it seems to me that just now they do but return to it. You find your father a ruined man, Cecily, ruined through his own folly in trusting too much to others. I suppose you must have your way, little puss, as you always used in the past, and I must forgive the rascal after all. But in truth, child, you have come back to me at an ill time, for my name will be in every man's mouth ere the week is gone."

A noise behind the screen made him turn his head quickly, expecting to see Truelove, but the firelight and the candles showed him a very different figure standing there. The red cloak, thrown open, revealed the scarlet uniform with the gold lacings and blue facings of an officer of His Majesty's Foot Guards; a handsome officer too, whose face and carriage had a certain air of commanding nobility about them that compelled attention. Little wonder that pretty Cecily had lost her heart to the gallant fellow.

"I thank you for your words, Sir Timothy," said the stranger. "You have thought ill of me, and little wonder, but the fault was not wholly mine. Since we have not met before, I must fain introduce myself—I am the Earl of Clantyre, who has the honour to be your son-in-law."

The old man looked from the stalwart soldier to the kneeling girl beside him, uncertain and bewildered.

SIR TIMOTHY'S CHRISTMAS EVE

"Surely this is some unseemly jest, my lord," he stammered at last.

"No jest indeed, and no 'my lord' from my father-in-law," said the young man, smiling. "And still less will Master Hardman find much humour in it, the scurvy, spiteful cur. But first give me your forgiveness for stealing your sweet Cecily away, and then the story."

He held out his hand frankly, and the old man took it.

"God bless you both," he said in a broken voice. "Who am I that I should forgive anyone when I need so much forgiveness myself? But why did you think to put the bailiffs in my house?"

The earl tossed his cloak over a chair back, and taking the little bundle of humanity from Cecily's arms, dandled it to and fro as he stood beside the fireplace.

"They came at Caleb Hardman's bidding, not mine, Sir Timothy," he said. "I sent them away an hour ago, and discharged the bond by burning it in your kitchen fire, as trusty Truelove here can bear testimony. I heard of it by chance when on a visit to my man of business this morning, and learned also that your partner has been robbing you through thick and thin. The sword thrust that slew my distant relative, and most unexpectedly secured the title to me, Hardman has used to wound you with, little knowing that the new earl was the very man who had frustrated his marriage schemes. My lawyer has evidence by which you may hang him if you wish it, but that will keep. Now I dare swear that not one of the letters we wrote you under cover to Caleb Hardman ever reached your hand."

"That did they not!" exclaimed Sir Timothy, forgetting all about the gout as he sprang to his feet.

"What did I tell you, puss?" said the young earl. "And now one last confession. If you will pardon our little plot, you owe

our presence here to night to the goodness of your own heart, Sir Timothy, for, in truth, we judged from your silence that you were still obdurate. Had you turned Cecily away you had never seen her again, and the bailiffs would have been your Christmas guests."

"Plague on them!" cried Sir Timothy. "Let's forget the rogues we ever here until my scoundrelly partner returns, and then he shall remember them to his dying day. Truelove," and he turned to the delighted old servant, "make a fire in the guest-chamber for the Earl and Countess."

"It has been blazing brightly this two hours and more, master."

"Good, then let the sheets be well aired, and bring out the silver pap-boat that was a christening gift from King Charles the Second to my honoured father."

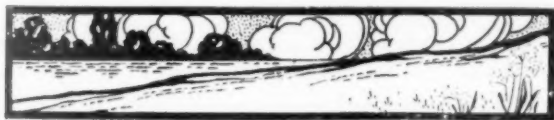
"Craving your honour's pardon," said Truelove, "but Mrs. Wriggley, the house-keeper, be a polishing of it even now."

"Why, bless my soul!" exclaimed the alderman, "all my orders seem to have been anticipated."

"And I am the culprit, father," said Cecily, flinging her arms round the old man's neck. "Ronald and I have thought of everything. We have been below stairs quite a while, and we will have the merriest Christmas in all the City! Hark! 'tis the waits. What is it they are singing?" And rising from the snowy street without came the appropriate words of the good old Christmas hymn:

"O may we keep and ponder in our mind
God's wondrous love in saving lost mankind."

The alderman's lips moved and his eyes glistened as he bowed his head reverently until the hymn was finished, and when he raised it his face bore a happy smile, for all the shadows had passed away from Sir Timothy's Christmas Eve!





The Snout of the Barne Glacier, with
Mount Erebus in the Background.

(Note the immense height of the ice-cliff in relation to the man and the sledge to the left. The volcano of Mount Erebus is 13,600 ft. in height, and has four great craters.)

Photo, Copyright
Herbert G. Posing.

CHRISTMAS in the ANTARCTIC



By
A.C. Marshall

(All the Photographs are the Copyright of Mr. Herbert G. Ponting, F.R.G.S., who accompanied Captain Scott's last Antarctic Expedition.)

CHRISTMAS itself is interwoven wool and warp with Home and all that Home holds dear. Sentimentally, we think of snow-wrapped rural churches encircled with fantastic, whitened trees, and so much have we quizzed and visualised the cameo of the Christmas card that a wide-spread blanket of snow will unconsciously bring to mind thoughts of Noël, of village bells, of reunions and of all that delightful, childish-adult simplicity for which the season stands.

What then of Christmas spent actually amid such a rolling, towering, endless welter of snow and ice as passes the comprehension of those who dwell in lands kissed by the Gulf Stream? What visions of their homelands successive explorers must have conjured up in mind as they put forth their greatest efforts in the Christmas season striving for their objective before they were driven helter-skelter into winter quarters for a night that lasts full five months!

Christmas at the Pole

It was on December 14th, 1911, that the Norwegian flag was actually planted at the South Pole by Roald Amundsen and four intrepid companions, following upon a dash that was favoured in many ways by weather, ice conditions and good health, and

this particular month stands out prominently in every record of Antarctic daring, effort—and tragedy.

Generally speaking, the actual temperatures of the south polar regions are higher than those of the north, yet the midsummer climate in the Antarctic makes itself well-nigh unendurable. Blizzard succeeds blizzard almost day by day, and whereas in this country a gale with a velocity of 55 miles an hour excites newspaper comment in large capitals, in the far south in many parts the wind velocity for the entire year averages 50 miles an hour and frequently attains to a speed of 100 miles.

Worse than the Trenches!

Moreover, these Christmas blizzards carry with them a cutting, stinging, blinding smother of frozen snow, which, whirling against the human form, checks forward progress as effectively as any cloud of gas rolling upon and enveloping our troops on the Western front. In fact, to a marked extent, the gas masks of the troops and snow masks as used by an exploring party on the march stand upon common ground.

In order fully to visualise the synonymous seasons of Christmas and midsummer in Antarctica one must bear in mind that at this time of year in these regions the sun is

** The photograph used for the heading shows Captain Scott's party on the Polar Plateau, returning from the South Pole. Reading from left to right, the figures are those of Petty Officer Evans, Captain Bates, Dr. Wilson, and Captain Scott. Note the snow masks.

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actually nearer to the earth than it approaches at any other point or time. It shines brilliantly, both by day and night, giving to the earth's surface greater heat than it can do even in the tropics. Yet so thick is the cap of ice and snow, harvest and aftermath of countless sunless winters, that this fierce sun-heat is absorbed, dissipated and nullified in the mere initial task of warming and partially melting a heaped-up surface.

The sun, therefore, instead of affording

skua gull—a rapacious bird found farther south than any other form of feathered life—may be noticed disporting itself in colonies in basins of melted snow. No general break-up of the ice and snow takes place, and the permanent ice ring before some of the coast line is reckoned literally to be hundreds of miles across.

By comparison with the inky days of winter, however, Christmas to the Antarctic explorer represents a time of hope and more congenial tasks. Those dashes with dogs



Cooking the Christmas Dinner
in an Antarctic Hut!

its usual direct and tangible warmth is merely utilised in minimising the intense cold of winter that has already passed, and at Ross Island only a few years ago the air temperature on a brilliantly radiant mid-summer day was eight degrees below freezing point, an intensity of cold that is frequently not reached in England during the course of the winter months.

Farther north, however, though the blizzards still blow so searchingly and cruelly, Christmas will often reveal open water. Over edges of ice and rock sparkling waterfalls appear for a few weeks. Birds are to be seen bathing in fresh water pools, and the

and sledge towards an objective are made at this season, which is a time of ceaseless effort, when holidays seem amiss. As a matter of fact, in the case of Amundsen's great exploration, it was felt so strongly on one occasion that Christmas could not be kept in a blaze of glorious sunshine that the festival was actually celebrated in the month of June, when the party was impotently snowed-up in its winter quarters!

At the same time, the call of Christmas will not be denied by any northern race. Even during this particular year some homage was paid to Christmas by the expedition, for dishes of skua gulls were specially prepared,



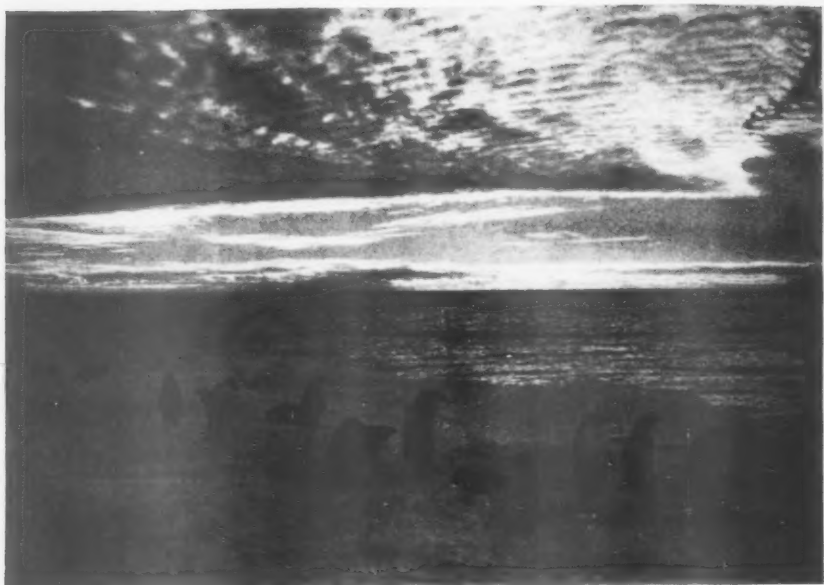
Mount Erebus—and a Dome Cloud forming.

The mighty cliffs of ice here seen, 200 to 300 feet in height, extend for hundreds of miles.



A Crevasse in a Glacier near the Sea.

When lightly covered with a layer of newly fallen snow, the deep crevasses form a death-trap for men and dogs.



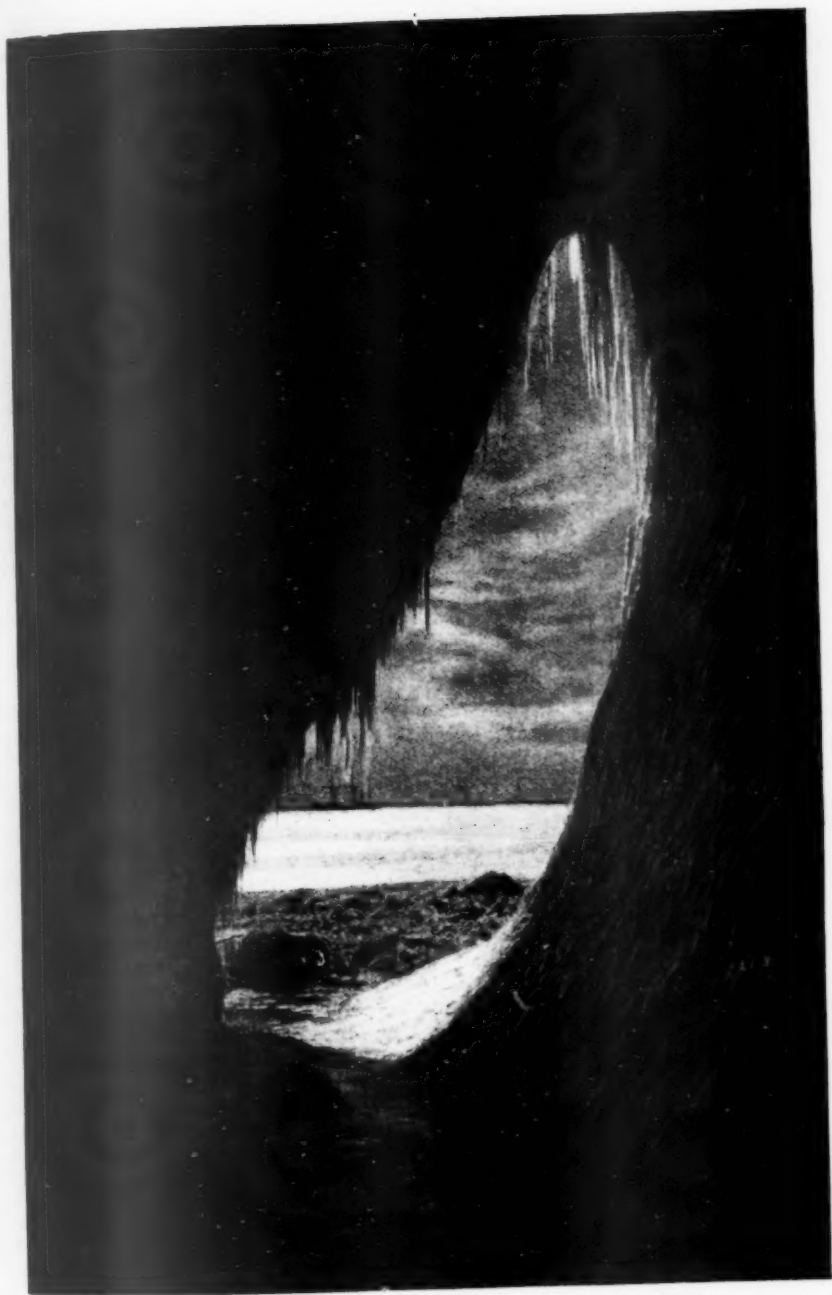
Greeting the Midnight Sun.

The quaint and friendly penguin breeds farther south than any other bird.



The Sea beginning to freeze.

It is most interesting to watch the sea freezing. First it begins to "steam," then "pancakes" of ice form, which gradually consolidate into large "floes."



Mr. Herbert Ponting's wonderful study of
the *Terra Nova* seen through an Ice Cavern.

*This photo is one of a series in the Antarctic
section of "The World we Live in."*

THE QUIVER



The *Terra Nova* in the McMurdo Sound.

One of Mr. Ponting's series in "The World we Live In."

and the men shaved with real razors instead of merely passing barber's clippers over their stubbly chins. Thoughts of home and dear ones were uppermost in mind, though the snow-houses so near the great Ice Barrier were melting to such an extent that the ceilings of the apartments were almost upon the floor.

But Christmas Day spent upon the march across vast wastes of the polar plateau itself gives little opportunity for celebration, feasting or revelry. The full sledging ration for one man on Capt. Scott's expedition consisted of eight biscuits, pemmican, butter, sugar, cocoa and tea, and no pro-

vision is made for roast beef, let alone for the plum pudding that is so essential a part of any Yuletide dinner.

Generally speaking, though, even upon these dashes to the Pole which have been so comparatively frequent in the last twenty years, Christmas has been kept by some partial break in the routine or some trifling and prearranged addition to the dietary. Men who have been far in the wilds, completely out of touch with home for a year and more, who have faced death in so many forms, are drawn together unconsciously by the spirit of Christmas far more than was ever Scrooge, and the singing of a familiar carol in the icy wastes has brought tears to the eyes of many a man. There is inevitably a tighten-

ing of the heart-strings in this unique season, an irresistible appeal from bygone memories, a reminiscing call that nothing can deny.

On the ships, so tubby and yet so serviceable, that have taken explorers into the ice pack and just so far as their blunt, uplifting bows could be driven in an Arctic summer, Christmas is kept up with vim and spirit. Usually there are tucked away symbols of the season, and the cook in his galley finds a store cupboard containing something worthy of the great occasion.

Thus, on board the *Fram*, whilst under Captain Amundsen she was driving down towards the great Ice Barrier one Christmas,

CHRISTMAS IN THE ANTARCTIC

the cabins were specially polished and cleaned, and the walls and ceilings brightened with all the available signal flags. "Happy Christmas" mottoes greeted one at the doorways, and a gramophone was rigged up in the skipper's cabin.

A change of clothing followed special hirsute adornment and ablutions; for some hours the engines were stopped; the interior of the ship was decorated with many coloured lamps, and on the main table was a Christmas tree. Numerous presents that had lain secreted were produced and distributed. There were extra fare, sing-songs, speeches, games, and a general merry festival 'twixt officers and men that did much to make the day in more ways than one memorable.

It was much the same in the voyage of the *Discovery* under the brilliant but ill-fated Captain Scott, save that Christmas was kept up on June 23rd, the Sunday falling nearest to midwinter's day in the Antarctic. With coloured papers and festoons of chains of similar material the rooms were decorated, and everything possible done to impart an atmosphere of Christmas to the ship.

From a mysterious store mince pies, plum puddings, and cakes made their appearance, and the tables themselves were decorated with temples and other hollow devices of ice prettily lighted up from within with candles. At 12.30 the officers made a round of the ship, distributing presents among the men, and immediately afterwards the mess-room dinner began.

At six that evening the ward-room dinner was served, the table being crowded with all the available plate and ornaments, and the evening was spent in singing and a general jollification.

"In the early hours," wrote Captain Scott, "we went out to cool our heated brows. It was calm and clear, and the full moon, high in the heavens, flooded the snow with its white, pure light; overhead a myriad stars irradiated the heavens, whilst the pale shafts of the aurora australis grew and waned in the southern sky. It was sacrilege to disturb a scene of such placid beauty, but for man it was a night of frolic, and as the dogs quickly caught the infection the silence was soon broken by a chorus of shouts and barking which continued



The Housing Problem in an Antarctic Hut.



How is this for a Christmas Dinner?

(A day's rations per man for a sledging party: Eight biscuits, pemmican, butter, sugar, cocoa, and tea.)

long after the bare ears and fingers should have warned their possessors that the temperature was nearly into the minus thirties.

"Eventually even exuberance of spirit was forced to give way to rapidly-growing frost-bites, and we retired within to contemplate, rather sadly, our extremities swelling as they thawed. Clearly under no conditions can one play tricks with our climate."

Another Christmas in the Antarctic was not so productive of good living. It was a Yuletide spent amid the ice by the British National Expedition, of which Captain Scott, Lieut. Armitage and Lieut. (now Sir Ernest) Shackleton were members.

On this particular occasion a large party on sledges was stranded by a furious blizzard on Christmas Day. Throughout the night the heat of the explorers' bodies caused their beds of snow to melt, and in their shelter they soon discovered they were lying in about six inches of water, from which it was inadvisable to move because of the conditions outside.

Christmas morning

greetings, instead of being tinged with the sentiment of the happy season, were more forceful than polite, but it happened luckily that the sun shone warmly, and that in consequence the bedding and clothing were speedily dried. Being unable to travel, the Christmas dinner had to be drawn from the meagre commissariat available, and the explorers sat down to fried cheese and bacon, flavoured and intermingled with horse-radish.

Quite apart from the solution of the riddle of a supposed vast southern continent there are vital scientific reasons for the

toil and hardships of the explorer. Astronomical, botanical, biological and other experts accompany the expeditions, and the fact that we can now visit the Antarctic—at the cinema—is due to the skill and daring of Mr. Herbert G. Ponting, F.R.G.S., the world-wide traveller and camera-artist, who accompanied Capt. Scott's Antarctic Expedition, and whose unique photographs illustrate this article. There is no record of gold in vast quantities being found in the Far South, but that there is coal enough to kindle the fires of the world has been proven.



Mr. Herbert G. Ponting, F.R.G.S., with his telephoto camera.

"ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE"

The Story of a Christmas at Sea

By FRANK H. SHAW

"WE must arrange some kind of a Christmas do for the steerage, anyhow," said Captain Loster.

"I suppose I ought to swear at my ill-luck in hitting a head gale, but it can't be helped, and I'm too old to fret over a Christmas spent at sea. Of course, we can't make New York before the night of the twenty-sixth now, can we?"

"It's impossible," said the chief officer. "Things seem to have worked against us a bit this trip, sir. Bad coal, hard weather, engine-room defects—but they would turn us round without giving a chance to overhaul."

"They hadn't any alternative; when the *Messina* was gutted in dock they hadn't another ship to put on for the run. Well, what do you suggest for a Christmas treat for the steerage? Rig the doctor up as Santa Claus, I suppose, and see what the barber has in the way of presents? We can get chocolates galore from the chief steward; and if we fix up a concert for Christmas night I'll fancy we'll have done our duty nobly."

"And get Mrs. Maybourne to recite something about the spirit of Christmas?" suggested the chief, and there was no attempt to disguise the scorn in his voice. Captain Loster shrugged his broad shoulders.

"A lot she cares about the spirit of Christmas or the spirit of anything else," he said, with as near an approach to curtness as he was capable of. A genial man, even-tempered, considerate for all, and, so it was rumoured, a man who always had the interests of his fellow-men at heart; he had gone out of his way a score of times to render the lot of a miserable steerage passenger less hard; he mothered his officers and crew, and he had always done the same. He seemed to exude kindness and generosity from every pore.

"But then, it doesn't do to be too hard on her," he said, as if in apology. "You

and I, Matson, haven't led her life, and we don't know what it is to be disappointed constantly. The woman's heart is starved, starved to death. Beautiful, yes, I grant you that; and she's rich, too. Why, the jewels she wears at dinner are worth a fortune. Ladies shouldn't be allowed to put such temptation in the way of a poverty-stricken liner skipper."

"She lives for nothing else," said the chief officer. "My steward told me—he got it from her steward—you know how these things creep round—that she spends hours in ogling her diamonds; letting them run through her hands as if they were water, laughing to them. He's seen her kiss them and hug them to her breast, when she thought no one was looking."

Captain Loster wrinkled his brows thoughtfully. He was a steadfast student of human problems; always seeking to lessen the burdens that fellow-wayfarers must carry through life; but whilst failing to sympathise with Mr. Matson's pronounced love of scandal, he felt little of pity for the woman under discussion.

"It seems to me such a waste of a life," he said. "She's not more than twenty-five, is she? She ought to have a couple of children about her and then she'd be more human. She doesn't need any Christmas presents, though, so we can leave her out of the reckoning."

They went off into a discussion of ways and means. The *Sestercia* had struck bad luck all the way across the Atlantic; and she was a ship that it was practically impossible to drive through everything she met. Captain Loster had hoped to make up wasted time by a final magnificent spurt to Sandy Hook, cutting the "corner" sharply, in order that his passengers might land late on Christmas Eve; but a twelve hours' breakdown in the engine-room had settled that project once for all, and a strong head gale had put the final cap upon the matter. The *Sestercia* could not, even by dint of the

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most furious driving, reach New York before the twenty-sixth.

"We haven't got much time, considering it's Christmas Eve now," the captain said. "We'd better get the doctor on to the game; he's worth a host in himself. You might drop down and see him, and bring him up with you."

Matson then went away, revolving ideas; for he was a kindly man at heart, though loving a gossip well. He returned anon with the ship's surgeon, one Anderson, a skilful person who could not be bound by the trammels of life ashore.

"I can't spare much time," said he. "I'm going to be busy in the steerage before long—very busy, I'm afraid. Yes, it's that Embledon woman, poor brute."

"She's the one who persisted in going out to meet her husband in New York, although a wire came to say that he'd been killed?" interrogated Captain Loster.

"The same woman. It's no use telling her that Mike is dead, she won't believe it. Says he couldn't die without seeing their child. But he is dead, of course; and the strain and anxiety and what not—well, she ought not to have come."

"Oh, it's that, is it?" said Matson.

"Yes, it's that. And she's in for the roughest kind of a passage; in fact, but for the child that isn't yet born, I'd say it would be the best thing that could happen if she went out. Curious how fond some women can be of their husbands. A bit different from Mrs. Maybourne."

"Isn't she fond of her husband?" demanded Matson eagerly. "Do you know anything about her? Dash it all, Doc., I haven't had a chance of a yarn with you since we started."

"I know a lot about her. A lot that isn't fit for publication, perhaps. But it won't go any farther, will it? Here goes, then."

"She used to be the sweetest girl you ever saw. Gentle, you know, and loving, and all that. My sister knew her at school, stayed with her people and so on; they were high up; the kind of people who turned up their noses at the modern aristocracy, and wouldn't associate much with anyone who hadn't at least ten generations of ancestors behind him. Daphne Merridew, as she was then, didn't quite hold with her people's notions, otherwise Daisy, my sister, wouldn't have had a look in; but Daisy was taken up,

and as she and I were always the best of chums—we are still, although she's married—I got inside information concerning Miss Merridew.

"She was in love with a man—I forget his name, although I met him once. You see, Daisy used to arrange for him to meet Miss Merridew at our house, which wasn't a thousand miles away from the hall, and it was there I met him. What was his name? Cameron—no; ah! I have it: Camboyne. He was in love with her, too—madly. But her people didn't encourage it; they had other views. They weren't very well off, and they fancied that if she could make the sort of marriage they wanted the estates would be saved."

"It sounds very much like a penny novelette," interposed Captain Loster.

"It goes on still more like one. They had a man in mind—Maybourne, a sweep of the lowest type. Vicious, mean and miserly; a bit of a brute, too. Nothing was sacred to him; he sneered at everything approaching natural affection; but he was as rich as Croesus, and that covered a multitude of sins in the minds of her parents. They found out about Camboyne, and told the girl that she mustn't think of him again; and when she persisted—Daisy helped her—they set other tools to work. They got someone along who spun a long yarn about Camboyne being a blackguard, who'd been mixed up in a very deplorable affair, and when she taxed him with it he couldn't deny it."

"Personally, I am inclined to think that Camboyne was not guilty, and that he was shielding another man; but that's neither here nor there."

"She didn't want to marry Maybourne; I couldn't imagine any girl wanting to do that; but her people wouldn't give her any rest until she did, and in the long run she married him. Things didn't matter much to her about that time; and I suppose she'd think any husband was much the same providing she couldn't have the one she'd hankered after."

"And Maybourne broke her heart." The surgeon brought his teeth together with a snap; his jaw was square and his eyes shone more than a little. "Deliberately broke her heart. He ill-treated her; we guessed at that, Daisy and I; although she never said anything in so many words."

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"ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE"

But I knew—I, a doctor. He abused her shamefully, taunted her almost to distraction, and led her a dog's life. So she isn't so much to be blamed as pitied. He looked on her as a beautiful pedestal on which to hang jewels—he was always a great connoisseur of diamonds—and she got diamonds instead of love and tenderness. Is it any wonder she got as hard as the nether millstone?

"Her child, too—it died the day after it was born; a good thing, too, for Maynard, her medical man, told me that if it had lived it would have been an imbecile. That finished the matter; she got to be like ice; wrapped herself up in herself, shunned her friends, went in for pleasure, red-hot pleasure, the sort that people think helps them to forget. Though it doesn't." The surgeon sighed a little here, and Captain Loster began to wonder if it were purely a love of the sea that kept him afloat.

"Then Maybourne died; was killed out hunting; and a jolly good thing. Some very unsavoury things came to light after he was safely buried. He'd sworn he'd leave his wife a pauper, and he'd destroyed the will he made after they were married; but he'd forgotten to make another, and so she came in for her share of his estate. When she got that she cleared the liabilities on her father's place, and practically told her parents that she'd done with them. But she kept the diamonds—she'd grown fond of them, as she hadn't anything else to grow fond of. Daisy was married by this time, and they drifted apart, anyhow; but you've got the main facts of the story; and I hope you'll judge her a bit more leniently. She's as hard as one of her own diamonds; but to understand is to know, or whatever the correct quotation is."

"Poor girl!" said Loster sympathetically. "Poor girl! I tell you, Doc., marriages like that ought to be forbidden by law. That woman's right place is in her own home, with children about her, doing good with her life, instead of wasting it as she is doing. Diamonds—all the diamonds in the world won't make up for the lack of a rag doll in the nursery. Diamonds and dollies; and I know which I'd choose if I'd my life to live over again!"

"Well, we can't help her," said Matson. "And now we'd better think about to-morrow. My idea is that we try to give

everyone aboard a Christmas present of sorts—it ought to be easy. There aren't very many all told; fifty in the steerage and thirty in the saloon. Cigars and cigarettes for the men, scent and chocolates for the women, and—the kiddies, they'll have their Santa Claus; I'll see to that."

"What shall we give Mrs. Maybourne?" asked Loster, and Matson laughed.

"She wouldn't thank us for anything," he said. "A woman who can wear ten thousand pounds' worth of diamonds without turning a hair doesn't want the sort of present we could give."

"No, I suppose not; I suppose not." The skipper was thoughtful; the story he had heard had touched him. "But I'd like everyone aboard to be happy to-morrow, in so far as we can make them happy. I'd like most of all to make Mrs. Maybourne happy." The surgeon shook his head.

"She's quite dead to sentiment," he said. "Don't labour under any illusion, the experience she has passed through has made her hard and cold. She'd take it as an insult if you spoke to her about her private affairs, and as for a present—well, I wouldn't like to try my luck in that way."

"I don't know; I'm a sentimentalist, you know, and I wouldn't like to think of her going without a present to-morrow. Let's see what we might give her." But there was nothing occurred to his mind.

"Give it up, sir," said Matson. "Or else, let her have what the other women are having—chocolates or scent. I'll pop down to the barber's now and see what he's got; and then there's the Santa Claus costume to fake up—to say nothing of a tree; we must have a tree."

"We'll have a tree; don't make any mistake on that head. If we have to make one of broom handles and ropeyarns we'll have a tree," volunteered the skipper brightly. "Gad! won't it be worth while to see the young 'uns when the tree is disclosed! It's twenty years since I was at a children's party, but the flavour's with me still. Good thing we've got a lot of kiddies aboard. I never saw such a shoal, considering the number of mothers. Christmas wouldn't be Christmas without children."

They formed themselves into a committee and interviewed the barber *en masse*; they went from his shop to the chief steward's cabin, and were closeted there for a long

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time. Before dinner was served that night the preparations were complete.

"It is unfortunate that we must spend Christmas at sea," said Loster, rising in his place as the dessert was served. "But we shall do our utmost to make it a happy day. I call on you all, ladies and gentlemen, to do your utmost to create the Christmas spirit aboard the *Sestercia* to-morrow." And he looked straight at Mrs. Maybourne as he spoke. That lady curled her lip ever so slightly and then stared intently at her plate.

Christmas! Her heart seemed to turn cold within her. It was on Christmas Day that she had heard the sinister news of Roy Camboyne's defection; it was on another Christmas Day that her husband had struck her a coward's blow. Christmas was a day of loathing and bitterness for her. When she heard that the ship would not reach port before the 26th she had rejoiced, saying that she would escape the sorry mockery of the festival.

She was resplendent with diamonds to-night; they sparkled on her smooth, white skin like points of dazzling light. And the cold, heartless stones were in keeping with her cold, statuesque face; they were beautiful, but they were soulless. More than one man among the passengers had sought to attract her; she had been barely civil to them, and had turned away at the earliest opportunity. With the surgeon she held no intercourse; he was associated with a portion of her life that would not bear contemplation, and she went as near to cutting him as she well could do.

It was blowing freshly when dinner was over, not at all the sort of weather to tempt people on deck; but Mrs. Maybourne took no heed of the rigour of the night. She wrapped herself in a thick cloak and gained the deck. Fronting the wind, baring her face to the lash of the wind-flung spray, she stood there at the break of the bridge for hour after hour. The wildness of the elements mated with the storm that tore her soul; a storm of resentment against cruel fate.

"Christmas!" she said once. "Oh, the farce of it, the shameful farce! Peace on earth! My God!"

Six bells rang out, and she turned to descend to her room. She did not expect to sleep; haunting visions of the past would forbid that for many an hour; but there

was a certain something kept jealously under lock and key in her jewel case that would bring a sort of languid ease. That was the worst of a sea-voyage; one had so much time to remember things that were best forgotten. All humanity had failed her; life was a nightmare; but it held her jewels; they would not play her a scurvy trick. She fingered the hard stones beneath her coat as she went slowly below; but to-night the faint thrill she had known in their possession did not assert itself.

"Good heavens! Can it be that that old man's maudlin banalities have influenced me?" she asked. "Nonsense. Christmas is a farce!" As she entered the corridor that gave on her state-room she was passed by the surgeon, who, clad in sweater, pyjamas and rubber boots, was hastening forward with a case in his hand. He spoke to her, but she turned her head away.

II

"WHAT'S that, Anderson?" Loster awakened and touched the switch that controlled the light. The surgeon was standing by his bunk, dripping from head to foot, tired-looking about the eyes. "What—what time is it?"

"Four o'clock, as near as I can make out. But things have gone badly with Mrs. Embledon."

"You don't mean—" The skipper was wide awake and sitting up in his bunk. "You don't mean she's not weathered it?"

"She's dead; I hadn't any hope from the beginning. Her troubles are over. But there's the child."

"What do you mean—the child?"

"The child she was expecting; it's alive. The mother's dead, but she's left her child behind, and the question is, what can we do with it? There isn't a woman in the steerage fit to take charge of it; those who aren't sea-sick are looking after other women's children. And aft—well, I don't see any chance there. As for the stewardesses, they're only silly young girls."

Captain Loster whistled shrilly and rubbed his head. "That's rather awkward, Anderson; it's rather awkward. I won't say I'm sorry the poor woman's dead; but I'm sorry for the child. We'll have to do something for it."

"Yes, but what? If only some woman

"ONE OF THE LEAST OF THESE"

would offer to look after it; it's a delicate mite at the best, and only the most unceasing care can save its life; but who're we to ask?"

"Ask Mrs. Maybourne, Doc."

A thunderbolt might have fallen at the surgeon's feet with less effect on his equanimity. He started and looked at the skipper as if at a madman.

"I'm not joking," he said coldly. "I want a nurse for the child, not an icehouse."

"And why shouldn't Mrs. Maybourne act as nurse?"

"You're on the wrong tack, I'm afraid."

"I don't think so. What you say has given me an idea. We've arranged Christmas presents for everyone aboard but her; and now—why not give the baby to her for a present? I'm a believer in old-time sentiments, Doc., and I hold to the idea that there's virtue in the touch of a child. Let a baby's fingers close round the hand of the hardest-hearted man alive and he'll—he'll soften for one minute."

"That's all very well in books, but it won't work in real life. Women aren't like men; they're all right with their own children, but—no, I'm afraid you've scored a miss, sir."

"Don't think anything of the sort, Doc. At the least, we can try. But listen to me for two minutes, and I'll explain my plan." He spoke quickly, and the doctor's face grew more and more puzzled. At the end he shook his head slowly.

"Won't do; she'll probably throw the baby out of the port-hole. At least, she'll rise Cain; think we're playing a practical joke on her."

"We can only try; and if it doesn't work we shan't be any worse off than before. She's an early riser; you rouse out a stewardess and tell her to let you know when Mrs. Maybourne goes for her bath. I'll be about long before she's awake, and I'll take the responsibility. Get a nap now. Where's the child, though?"

"In my room; it's warmer than down the steerage. No need for you to turn out, though." Captain Loster had climbed to the floor and was reaching for his dressing-gown.

"I'm fond of children," he said softly. "When I was home this last time my second daughter, Effie, had her third child, and I got to the house just afterwards. I felt as

if forty years had slipped off my shoulders when it clawed at me with its tiny fingers."

He accompanied Dr. Anderson to his cabin and picked up the frail morsel of humanity that lay in the surgeon's bunk.

"I'm a great believer in children," he said. "Anderson, perhaps it's given to us to break the ice away from Mrs. Maybourne's heart. I tell you, I couldn't sleep for hours, thinking over her case; it's pitiful, pitiful."

He went back to his cabin after a while, but could not sleep. He was haunted by an impression of that cold, proud woman, indifferent to all claims of sentiment or feeling, holding herself aloof from the world, to hide the breaking of her heart.

"Who knows?" he muttered. "Who knows?"

At half-past seven Anderson entered the room. "I don't pretend to think anything about the scheme," he said, "but you're skipper here. Mrs. Maybourne has been called, and her room will be empty in a few minutes." Loster was conscious of a tingle of excitement as he followed the surgeon to his cabin. The child lay fast asleep in the bunk. It was evident that Anderson had contented himself with the settee. But as Loster lifted it gently a pair of blue eyes as wonderful as a tropical sky opened wide and stared solemnly into his face.

"Goodness me! she can't keep up against that," said the skipper, and went out as a stewardess knocked at the door. Mrs. Maybourne had gone to her bath and the coast was clear. The two men tiptoed gently along the alleyway and peered about like two schoolboys intent on a practical joke. None offered to stop them, and they did their work well. The baby was placed in Mrs. Maybourne's sleeping place and carefully covered with spare blankets; then captain and surgeon went back to await events.

Mrs. Maybourne had been invigorated by the plunge into ice-cold brine, but almost at once the glow left her and the numb ache of her misery returned. That it was Christmas morning had hardly occurred to her; but for some unknown reason she had dreamt during the night of those few moments of joy that had come to her when her own child was laid on her breast. She was thinking of the boy now, and wondering whether he would have made a difference to her.

"No; it would have been just the same,"

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she thought. "He'd have grown up like his father, and—and—" She writhed in an agony of soul. Her life was ruined; the one man she had loved with all the strength of her heart had been unworthy; he had gone from her without a word of explanation, a foul thing. But if the child had lived—if only the child had lived!

She turned the handle and entered her cabin. Came to her ears a faint, unusual sound, suspiciously like the whimper of a child. Amazed, she looked about her, naming it for a freak of her imagination; but no; lying there, in a nest of downy blankets, was a child, as it might be her own. She thought at first that she was dreaming, that she would awake in a moment to find the vision fade; but though she rubbed her eyes the picture did not vanish. She stepped cautiously to the bunk, and her unbound hair fell like a shower of gold upon the uncovered face. The baby opened its eyes and stared solemnly at her; something caught tightly at her throat; it was almost a sob. Tentatively she put forth one slim white hand and touched the face as soft as a rose leaf; she touched a groping hand and baby fingers closed about her own.

"Ridiculous!" she said. "I wonder who has been guilty of this gross impertinence!" And she rang her bell at once. The stewardess, a little pale, maybe, presented herself immediately, as though she had been awaiting developments.

"Answer me this; who put that child here?" demanded Mrs. Maybourne severely. "Such a piece of effrontery I never heard of."

"It was Captain Loster, ma'am; at least, I think so." Mrs. Maybourne emitted a sound that might have been a snort of indignation.

"Tell Captain Loster—take this child away at once; no, ask Captain Loster to come here at once." She waited, resolutely turning herself from the berth wherein the child lay awake. She must keep her eyes from its infantile helplessness, or else that barrier which she had so resolutely erected between herself and the world might be broken down. Her jewel case—a large one and weighty—lay on the table; she played with its handles and weighed it in her hands. But at a discreet tap on the door she turned suddenly, drawing herself up.

"Come in," she said, drawing her dressing-

gown closer about her. Captain Loster showed his face wreathed in smiles, but they were nervous smiles at the best.

"You asked for me, I believe," he said.

"I did; I want to know who is responsible for this gross piece of impertinence," she said sternly. "A child has come from goodness knows where to my room, and I am told that you have something to do with it."

"I have everything to do with it. I put the baby there, ma'am."

"Then be good enough to have it removed at once. I may be tempted to report the matter to your owners and ask for a proper explanation."

"There, there," said the kindly old man soothingly; "there, I was afraid you'd take it that way, but I hoped. Mrs. Maybourne, let me tell you that that child is an orphan; its mother died this morning in giving it birth. There isn't another woman in the ship who is capable of looking after the mite, and so I took the liberty of giving you the chance."

"And I refuse the chance. What then?"

"You refuse the chance?" The skipper, in his indignation, had entered the room fully now; he was swelling with anger. "You refuse! You ought to be ashamed of yourself, then, and may I be forgiven for losing my temper on Christmas morning, of all days in the year! Listen to me, and count it a privilege that you are given the opportunity of showing your womanhood. This is the anniversary of Christ's birth, madam; and He came into the world as a little child. If thoughts of what this season means cannot move you in your hardness, at least let thoughts of common humanity stir you to forget your own selfishness and give to that child the care it cannot otherwise receive."

"What do you mean?" She had not been spoken to so peremptorily for many a day—never since her husband died—and even then there was not the same accent of regret in the voice of the man now dead.

"I mean what I say. 'Unto us this day a child is born.' Will you cast him out—dare you cast him out? Don't call yourself a Christian if you dare. I put the child there because you, of all the passengers on board, hadn't a Christmas present allotted to you; and I thought—I believed—" Poor old Loster stammered; he was very



"Amazed, she looked about her. . . There, lying in a nest of downy blankets, was a child, as it might be her own."

Drawn by
E. J. Selous

THE QUIVER

near to tears. In his heart he sympathised with the desperate woman; he hated to be stern with her, but he felt it his duty.

"You are insulting—yes, insulting," she cried. "I do not know—I have never——"

"Mrs. Maybourne, soften your heart," he said pleadingly. "Take care of the child for a little while; it will be no great burden for you. Only for a little while, until we reach our port; he will be given to someone in authority then. But don't be false to your womanhood by refusing to take him in now."

"Be good enough to go," she said in a broken voice, and he went away very quietly. She turned to the bunk, and the child opened its eyes again. Perhaps she remembered that glow that had surged through her at the touch of her own child's fingers, at sight of his pleading eyes. Suddenly her eyes filled with tears; she sank on her knees beside the bed.

"Oh, baby, baby!" she sobbed. "Tell me what to do." The baby stared at her thoughtfully.

III

MR. MATSON made an excellent Santa Claus. He had secured sufficient red bunting from the ship's stores to make his robe, and the surgeon had supplied him with cotton wool; teased-out oakum made an excellent beard and wig, and as it was snowing hard when four o'clock arrived—the hour fixed upon for the celebration of Christmas—he was plentifully powdered with real snow before he reached the main room of the steerage.

The cabin passengers had gathered to witness the fun; they, too, had entered into the spirit of the day, and had made their own contributions to the tree that, screened behind an old awning, was to be revealed after Father Christmas had made his opening speech. But Mrs. Maybourne was not there; she had not appeared in public all day. Meals had been served to her in her room, and she had preserved the silence of the dead on the subject of the child.

"Bless 'em, they're as happy as sand-boys," said Captain Loster, who had stolen a minute from the bridge to watch the festivities. "They don't care whether they're ashore or afloat; Christmas isn't a matter of locality."

Santa Claus advanced with stately steps towards the awning, and there paused impressively. Cheering children gathered about him, tugging at his gown, amazed at the surprise. Their mothers had told them that Christmas could not reach them in mid-Atlantic, and their sorrow had been keen; but now their joy was a hundredfold keener. This was something like a Christmas, such as they remembered at home.

"From distant lands I come," cried Santa Claus, "for wherever children are there must I be. In the name of all humanity I bid you a merry Christmas." He was not a fluent speaker; he wrestled for a moment with words, and then because he could think of nothing more to say, drew back the awning. Another cheer, a loud, shrill cheer this time, as the spectacle was revealed in all its wonder. They had constructed a tree—heaven alone knows how. Broomsticks and green bunting entered largely into its composition; but they had found a few palms in the second saloon and had commandeered them mercilessly. Candles were placed on every available spot, and the light was very brilliant; the great steerage room was darkened as the screen was drawn aside to give full effect to the blazing magnificence. Even the saloon passengers clapped their hands in admiration; they had known some such surprise was to be put into effect, but they were not prepared for the whole-hearted enthusiasm of the British sailorman.

"An albatross brought me," averred Santa Claus. "In a great balloon towed by—by Mother Carey's chickens, I crossed the raging main. I flew on the wings of the morning; I——"

"He's contradicted himself twice already," muttered the surgeon. "I think he'd better start to give the presents away now and not perjure himself further." Matson recognised the need, for he reached up and took down a parcel from the tree and called a name aloud. A four-year-old child sped forward with a gurgle of delight, and retired entranced, the possessor of a toy ship that a sailor had made in an hour. The fun grew fast and furious; the cheering was incessant; the parcels seemed literally to fly from the tree into the eagerly outstretched hands. When the last package had been presented, when the last candle was burning low, the children were summoned to another section

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of the steerage, and found their Christmas dinner awaited them, hot and redolent of lusciousness. How they feasted, and how they talked! The surgeon felt his eyes fill with moisture; many of the watchers remembered Christmases past and felt ice long-formed thaw away from their jaded hearts. Christmas is not Christmas where children are not.

"It's worth while, the bit of trouble we've taken," said Matson, after he had removed his disguise, to the surgeon. They had forgathered in the companionway, and stood for a moment looking out on the gathering night. There was not much wind now, but thick snow was falling and there was a suspicion of fog; the sidelights were almost invisible, and the faint sheen about the masthead lights could not be seen more than a couple of dozen feet. The *Sestercia* was pounding through the smother at her best gait; the engineers were wishful to make up for lost time.

"Yes, it's worth all the trouble, to make people happy," said the surgeon. "And so little does it at times. I'll wager there won't be the same enjoyment shown to-night at dinner when the grown-ups receive their presents. We're a blasé race, Matson."

"Not a bit of it," put in a voice behind them, a sturdy voice. They turned, to see Captain Loster at their elbows. The skipper's oilskins dripped with melted snow, some flakes adhered to his beard; he typified the spirit of Christmas. "Jove! but it's cold," he continued, "and it doesn't seem as if this fog were going to lift; getting thicker. Anderson, I wonder how our scheme is going to work out?"

"Your scheme, sir? Mrs. Maybourne?" The skipper nodded gravely. Matson went out on deck and climbed to the bridge; the first officer had taken his duties there whilst he played Santa Claus.

"Yes, Mrs. Maybourne; I'm afraid she's offended. She hasn't shown herself in public since the baby was put in her cabin. But I thought I was acting for the best; the touch of a child's hand, you know."

"That's all very well in books, but we're dealing with facts now. One thing, she hasn't turned the child adrift, as she might have done."

"She couldn't very well; I spoke harshly to her about her duty. But if the

charm had worked there'd have been no need to talk, no need. Well, we're on the knees of the gods, Anderson. But it's a pity to see a woman like that caring for nothing but diamonds."

Loster went to the bridge, and the surgeon to his room. Barely was he seated than the ship shuddered violently; there was a terrific crashing sound like to nothing the surgeon had ever heard. His first thought was that they had run down a derelict; but when he charged out to the deck he was reassured. The chief engineer was struggling through the snow towards the bridge.

"Broken the tail shaft; she's safe enough but can't move!" he bawled. Anderson followed him to the bridge and listened to the hurried colloquy that ensued.

"No great harm done; we're helpless; but what's the use of wireless if not at a time like this?" said the engineer. "There'll be the *Stornoway* passing after midnight, too; she'll stand by till daylight if we give her our position."

"Yes, there's no danger; the sea's calm," agreed Loster. "I'll just tell the Marconi man to send a message through; we ought to be in touch with something. Anderson, you might take a walk round and assure the passengers that there's no danger." The surgeon obeyed; stewards passed the word along the strangely silent alleyways; little knots of white-faced passengers broke up, laughter took the place of frightened speechlessness. The voyagers recognised that they were aboard a well-found steamer in a densely populated highway where assistance would be forthcoming almost at once. The falling snow created no confusion below; it was soundless, and the blare of the foghorn was lessened considerably by the fleecy downpour.

"We'll serve dinner as usual," said Captain Loster to the chief steward. "Above all, we mustn't frighten the people. Ask the surgeon to come to me."

Anderson reported himself on the bridge and stated that the ship was quiet.

"Let 'em have their Christmas presents as we'd arranged; I'll drop down just in time for dinner," said Loster. "No harm; we're as safe as if we were in dock. There'll be a bit of delay, of course, but that can't be helped." And so it was arranged.

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The bugle blew in the ordinary way; the passengers, rising to the emergency, dressed religiously and presented themselves at table and took their seats. Last of all to arrive, as the skipper took his place at the head of the single table, was Mrs. Maybourne. She was dressed very simply, and not a single jewel adorned her; she looked younger than she had looked, and it seemed to Loster's wistful eyes as if a strange pensiveness permeated her. She spoke little, for her heart was throbbing as she had not known it throb for many a day. Not that she owned to herself that the child was anything to her; but the hardest woman cannot feel the touch of a rose-leaf body without feeling some long silent chord sway and vibrate. Resentment and softness struggled strangely within her; she warmed at the gaze of Loster's shrewd eyes; she fancied the surgeon was laughing at her; but she remembered her own day-old child and fought the resentment down.

"A happy Christmas to all, in spite of misfortunes," said Captain Loster, rising with a full glass in his hand. "And the ship's arranged to give you all, ladies and gentlemen, a little present on this day, to remind you that Christmas isn't a matter of latitude and longitude. Doctor Anderson will make the presentation, and—" He beckoned a steward towards him.

"Go to the bridge and tell Mr. Matson that I should be obliged if he would keep the foghorn sounding constantly," he said. The steward went towards the folding doors of the saloon, but got no farther. For even as Anderson passed towards the head of the table, his arms laden with packages, a steward behind him bearing more, the ship shook to her keelson, the lights flickered and went out, there was a confused clamour above, the heavy tread of feet, and then:

"Cut down to the water's edge, sir—sinking fast," shouted someone.

"Be calm; let there be no confusion," ordered Captain Loster, and as he spoke the lights came on again. "I beseech you to be calm; there are boats enough to save all." But he knew—he felt the ship was near her death. He had commanded the *Sestercia* for many years and understood every feel of her; she was settling fast; already she had heeled frightfully.

They crowded to the deck to witness their position in its full horror. Silently, like a spectre of the night, the destroyer had hurtled down upon them, delivered its blow and vanished. A sailing ship, so the chief officer said breathlessly; he had seen its head sails; it was travelling swiftly and had struck them right amidships. The ship was sinking fast.

"All hands to the boats," said Loster, after a single glance. "As quickly as possible, but no disorder. There is no time for hesitation, and the boats must not be overburdened."

Mrs. Maybourne was amongst those who waited on the deck to hear the ultimate news. As Loster spoke there was a rush below on the part of the saloon passengers; quartermasters were already fighting back those of the steerage who tried to rush; the boats were being swung out in rapid time. The snow had ceased, but the fog still hung about fleecily, adding to the sense of fear that obsessed all aboard. Mrs. Maybourne had one thought as she realised the imminence of her peril—her jewels. They were below in her cabin; a heavy case contained them; they meant everything to her. Love was lost to her, but the jewels remained.

She darted down the alleyway swiftly, intent on salving these gems of hers. There was a pressing need for haste; the ship was sinking fast. Even as she went she could hear voices bellowing orders to the passengers to take to the boats—women and children first. A stewardess ran past her and refused to halt; her face was as white as death and her eyes were very wild. Mrs. Maybourne reached the door of her cabin and tried to enter, but somehow the lock had jammed. Desperately she hurled herself against the woodwork and felt it creak, but it would not give. She shook the handle like a madwoman, it turned precipitately, and she was almost thrown on her face.

The jewel-case was on the dressing-table, saved from being dashed to the floor by the ledge. She snatched it up and was turning to the door again when the child emitted a piercing cry.

And there on the threshold she paused like a woman frozen to ice. She had forgotten the child. She looked at it where it lay in the bunk, and something approaching a devil's thought came into her mind.



"A four-year-old child sped forward, and retired entranced, the possessor of a toy ship"—p. 174.

Drawn by
Baltiel Salmon.

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What did she owe the child? Nothing—nothing. It was some stray brat that had been foisted on her as a joke, a practical joke, and—and— She allowed the evil temptation to have its way with her for a single moment that in after days seemed like an hour. No one could blame her if she left the child behind. Or stay; she would go and send someone to bring the infant up on deck; she would secure her jewels, and then—then—

But there was no time for that. She ran into the corridor; not a soul was to be seen. She shouted; there was no answer. Those on deck had not noticed her absence; if any thought of her they would say that she was in some other boat. And the ship was sinking, sinking; she could tell that, inexperienced as she was. She heard the creaking din of a lowered boat above her; she heard the craft thudding against the ship's side; there was not a single moment to lose.

Why not leave the child behind? No, that could not be done; she must make some attempt to save it. She gathered it in her arms, and it ceased its outcry, whimpering softly; she caught up the jewel-case and made for the door. Then—her brain was working swiftly—she remembered that if the little one were exposed to the inclemencies of the night without sufficient covering it must assuredly die. She could not carry the child, the jewel-case, and blankets; one or the other must be left behind.

It came to her what she had meditated, and shame shook her to her deeps. In effect she was a murderess, placing the safety of her jewels before the life of a little child. She remembered—the human mind works swiftly in moments of great stress—how other baby fingers had clutched her own, how other eyes, as blue as these, had gazed into her eyes. A harsh sob tore its way from her throat; she hesitated no longer. Let the jewels care for themselves; the child must be saved. She swathed it in weighty blankets, dragging them with haste from the bunk; and without a single backward glance at the jewel-case that lay on the floor where she had flung it down, she sped out to the deck.

The last boat was leaving, but at her cry those who were lowering away hesitated. Captain Loster stood on the deck, peering

over; he turned and straightened himself sharply.

"A woman left behind!" he cried. "Hold on, everyone; look alive there, there's not a second to be lost." And he lifted Mrs. Maybourne into the boat. The child moved beneath the weight of its coverings and cried out aloud; Mrs. Maybourne, feeling a strange weakness overcoming her, hugged it closely to her breast.

"Shove off; give way!" said Loster gruffly, and the boat moved out into the obscurity of the winter sea. They saw nothing of the *Sestercia's* ending; fresh-falling snow hid that tragic passing from human eyes; but Mrs. Maybourne, crouched in the stern-sheets between the captain and the surgeon, heard Loster's sharp, convulsive sob as a wave set the boat rocking like a cork.

IV

THEIR plight was not an enviable one. They were alone on a waste of water; snow and fog enshrouded them as with a garment; the boats, hastily lowered and got away, were insufficiently provisioned. But Captain Loster made the best of things in his optimistic way.

"We got off signals by wireless," he said. "We gave our exact position; there'll be something coming along soon." He did not voice his natural fear: that in the great expanse a boat might easily be passed unnoticed. It was not in his nature to meet trouble half-way, but his heart was heavy within him. An entire night must be spent at the least in the open, and that night was bitterly cold. Danger from the sea there was little; a row-boat could have lived easily, for the wind that had driven the sailing ship into the *Sestercia's* vitals had died away as suddenly as it had arisen.

The fate of the destroyer was wrapped in mystery; whether she had sunk as she recoiled from the blow, none could tell. The other boats had parted company, thrusting off from the ship as they were lowered, fearing to be dragged down into the vortex, and though those aboard the captain's boat shouted lustily, they heard no answering cry. The fog shrouded them completely; they might have been tossing about on a virgin sea.

Mrs. Maybourne said nothing; she was busy trying to quieten the child, who was

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crying feebly. She was clad in evening dress, scanty enough of itself, and the wind blew through the flimsy, saturated fabric, chilling her to the bone; but she spared not a single fold of the blankets she had rescued for her own comfort; she enfolded the child closer and closer. It still cried; she pressed it to her breast and shivered.

"Try this, ma'am; you're all a-shiver," she heard Loster say, and the captain's coat was wrapped about her shoulders. It was warm and dry, and the comfort was inexpressible; but the blankets in which the child was wrapped were wet and chilly; she moved uneasily.

"Will you wrap it round the little one?" she said piteously. "I can manage without anything." And she did not rest until she was obeyed. She could not do enough for the waif; repentance was surging through her; she remembered that loathsome temptation of an hour before, when the devil had clawed at her heart with scorching fingers.

The hours dragged slowly away. Loster sat at the tiller, staring into the gloom, striving to create some shadow of hope from nothingness. The child had ceased its whimpering cry long before; but from the occasional twitching of its tiny limbs Mrs. Maybourne knew that it still lived.

In after days she could never analyse the thoughts that night brought her. But the pressure of the infant's body against her own removed in some inexplicable way the barrier that the years had formed about her heart; a new softness grew upon her as she drew nearer and nearer to the gates of death. There were times when she wondered whether she might not have lifted her husband up out of the slough of his own miserliness and meanness to a nobler height; but such regrets were vain. She had failed there; she had resolutely ignored the opportunities given to her by her Maker, even as she almost ignored this other opportunity. But she had saved the child, and the child was saving her in return. Dimly through her discomfort and suffering came glimpses of a brighter life; a life spent in brave, good deeds, herself sunk from view, others elevated to the higher place. Something of the vast significance of Christmas came to her, too; another Child had come into the world, unheralded, despised, to save mankind.

And out of it all, heart-achingly, poignant,

almost beyond endurance, came many thoughts of the past. Especially did thoughts of Hugh Camboyne surge through her brain, in spite of her efforts to banish them to the obscurity from whence they had sprung. Hugh Camboyne was nothing to her; he was unworthy a single thought. There had been a time when he was more than all the world to her; but that was long ago. And he—what had the years brought him?

In vain she thrust the thought away; her will power was weakening, because of the stress she was undergoing. It would return, insistently, compellingly. Hugh Camboyne, the man she had loved with all her heart and soul! She could remember now what that love had meant to her before the clinkers of selfishness caked about her being; she recalled softer moments, when a look into his face had been to her as a taste of heaven itself. But that was past and done with; he had forgotten her; he could have done nothing else. But there was still the child, something to cling to her whilst the thunders of mortification and despair clashed about her.

There was that other Child, too, and she found it in her heart, agonised though she was, to breathe a prayer to that Child to grant Hugh Camboyne a happy Christmas. It was the first time she had prayed since that night when her world had turned to dust and ashes about her, when the light of her life was extinguished like a candle in the wind. Presently, with the prayer still on her lips, her head sank forward on her breast, above the sleeping child, her eyes closed, her senses swept her away towards a great and glowing light.

She roused herself suddenly, and her first thought was for the child. It was full day; she must have slept for many hours; she moved aside the coverings and looked within. The child stirred softly and she saw its puckered face; all was well with the mite; the day had not brought death.

But why were all the men straining their necks and peering towards the bow? She lifted her eyes and saw there before her, hazily because of the thin veil of fog that still clung to the water the misty outlines of a great ship!

"She's seen us," cried Captain Loster; and she noticed, with a wave of pity, that he was shivering in his shirt-sleeves; his

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face was white as chalk, save where the dark shadows clung beneath his sunken eyes. "Shout again, men; together—ah!" There came in answer to the loud-voiced cry the boom of the steamer's siren.

"Out oars," said the captain huskily. "Give way together." And they drew alongside the steamer carefully. A basket was lowered, and willing hands placed Mrs. Maybourne and her burden within; other willing hands drew her softly into safety; the basket was surrounded by an eager crowd, wishful to help. Mrs. Maybourne was stiff and sore; her limbs were racked with pain, but she took no thought to them.

"Will some lady take the child?" she said piteously. "He must be fed, but—but——"

"Daphne!" said an unbelieving voice. "Daphne!" A tall man with a lined face broke through the crowd and caught her as she swayed towards him.



"So it might have been a worse Christmas after all," said Captain Loster, who, after a hot bath and a change, to say nothing of a satisfactory meal, was almost himself

again. "All the boats picked up, no lives lost, and——"

"And Mrs. Maybourne on the high road to happiness," said the surgeon. "I wonder whether you'd call it chance that brought Camboyne aboard this identical ship?"

"I'd call it the hand of God," said the skipper brusquely, a trifle ashamed of his emotion. "Could he have seen her at a better time than with that child in her arms?"

"I'm going to tell him," said the surgeon thoughtfully, "about how she refused the coverings for herself and wrapped them round the child. He's a sentimentalist; it will appeal to him."

But Camboyne hardly needed the tale to be told. He had seen something in Daphne Maybourne's face as she was held in his arms that told him the shadows of the years between had vanished as a dream of the night. Afterwards he would tell her the truth about the other affair; he would tell how he had screened a man now dead; but meantime a little child had led her to his arms.

"And she's the one we hadn't a Christmas present for," said Loster, thinking the matter over. "Seems to me she's come off best of all."



KING COPHETUA

The story of King Cophetua and the Beggar Maid is one of those sweetly pretty legends that have somehow found their way into our literature. The modern short story has developed into a fine art, but can we improve on "Pandora's Box," "St. George and the Dragon," "Echo and Narcissus," "Good King Wenceslas," "The Quest of the Golden Fleece," "Sir Galahad," and the other Arthurian stories? These, and a great many others, have been collected and retold in "My Book of Beautiful Legends," by Christine Chaundler and Eric Wood (Cassell: 6s.). The illustration on the opposite page is a black-and-white reproduction of one of the twelve beautiful coloured illustrations by A. C. Michael. This is an ideal Christmas Gift-book for young people.



King Cophetua and
the Beggar Maid.

Drawn by
A. C. Michael.

"For a moment they stood looking at each other—the barefoot beggar-girl in her rags and tatters, and the King in his jewelled crown. . . . Then the King lifted his gold chain from his neck and flung it over the beggar-girl's head."

FOR THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

A New Method of Vitalising Bible Stories

By Canon W. R. YATES

(Late Residentiary Canon at Jerusalem)

THE problem of the Sunday School teacher is first of all to hold and retain the attention of his scholars, and then to make real and vivid the lessons he would teach.

Of late years much has been done to render the work of the teacher more satisfactory and efficient. How much better equipped is the modern teacher, with his helps and illustrations, than his predecessor of a generation ago! To-day it is realised that if the

itself is the Fifth Gospel." Unfortunately this is impossible by reason of time and money—not to mention the war, which has cut us entirely off from the Holy Land. There are many excellent helps provided for teachers, and descriptions of Bible scenes may readily be obtained. But teachers rely too much on mere descriptions. One picture, if it is rightly presented, will often convey more than half an hour's talk.

In this connection it is interesting to

note that there is a movement to use in the Sunday School class that old and somewhat neglected friend, the stereoscope.

Some years ago the stereoscope had a passing favour as a form of entertainment. The invention itself was of considerable scientific interest. As Mr. John Morton says



The Stereograph in the Sunday School.

Photo: Underwood.

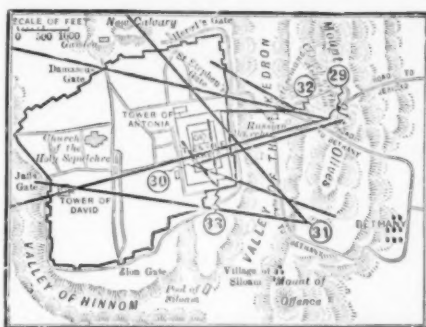
Bible story is to be understood and believed it must be made real. Not only must the manners and customs of the East be understood, but the places themselves pictured to the mind of the child. If only we could take our scholars to the Holy Land, and let them see for themselves the places where the great events of the past happened, the Bible would be a new book to them. As Dr. Cunningham Geikie reminds us, "Palestine

in *The Child*: "The method by which the rather startling effect is produced must be known to most of us. By taking two photographs simultaneously with two lenses at the same distance from each other as are the eyes of the observer, it was found, when these photographs were properly mounted and seen through a special instrument, the stereoscope, that the effect produced was as though the place pictured were seen through

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an open window, the third dimension of depth being shown as fully as the other dimensions of space. So in many homes the stereoscope held its place—with a miscellaneous collection of stereographs of scenery and life—as an object of passing interest, and when, in the course of a short time, the interest in these particular pictures *did* pass, the stereoscope was relegated to the attic. Now it seems, after years of abuse and disuse, it is to come into its own again and take its place as one of the most valuable of educational helps.

"Pictures have long been recognised as being an integral part of any textbook, and the selection of the illustrations as rivalling in importance the text itself. This very abundance of illustrations seems, in a sense, to detract from the effect. There are so many pictures to look at nowadays that unless they are of exceptional interest, or unless they are able to make a vivid impression upon the child's mind, they fail in a large degree of serving their purpose. But with the stereograph this feeling of merely looking at a picture seems to vanish, and the child gets an extraordinary impression of 'being on the spot,' of bodily presence, which stimulates its interest and encourages observation as it would seem only an actual visit to the place might do.



Psychologists have explained this feeling in learned terms of 'sense perceptions'; but whether we can follow the explanations or not, the fact remains—a fact too valuable not to be utilised."

The value of this new method applied to Sunday School work will be readily understood. Of course, it must be applied properly. Indeed, I have seen a well-intentioned person show a series of stereoscopic pictures to a class of boys who have actually gone away without realising what countries they had been visiting. The Underwood visual method of Bible teaching avoids this danger by supplying unique maps, such as the one here produced. An

alert teacher could well supplement these maps by a rough blackboard sketch showing in fuller size just the features included in certain "V's"—each of which corresponds with numbered stereoscopic outlooks. The chief value of these keyed Palestine maps is in enabling scholars to grasp the fact that Bible places are *real* places, and that the stereoscopic pictures which so immediately grip their attention have a direct corresponding relation to the map in front of them and to the Bible lessons they read about.

A fact or incident thus impressed in three ways—by speech, by hand, and by vision through the stereoscope—is fixed permanently on the memory. Its reality is indisputable.

Before I came across the Underwood method of teaching I had, more than once, spoken to my Bible class of boy scouts of the shepherd lads of Judea. I thought that if I could make anyone live before them, it was a boy like



The Shepherd and the Sheep.

Stereograph : Underwood.

THE QUIVER

themselves. And, in a measure, they were interested. I told them of his looks, how handsome he is, almost invariably. Of course, his skin is brown, with a ruddy hue—"but colour prejudice is so silly; besides, he thinks our white faces are leprous!" Then I told how he carries the same tools and weapons, the sling, the rod and staff; how he dresses in the same sort of clothes. Then, how he is a human boy, mischievous, and full of fun; and this they saw when I described one of them, on the sly trying to put his stick into my bicycle wheel!

But although I had been in the country and had my own experiences to tell, nothing brought the shepherd lad of Bethlehem and Hebron so vividly before them as this picture in stereoscopic form, with its distinct presentation of a living lad now growing into manhood among the Judean hills. The stereographs have depth and perspective. The lad is alive!

My scouts could really see such a shepherd, as we met him outside Jerusalem one morning, carrying a great panther over one shoulder—the other all crunched and bleeding. They listened breathlessly to the account of how the creature when disturbed sprang out of the cave, into which the boy was going to rest from the fierce morning heat, and had fastened upon his shoulder, mauling it horribly; of how the boy struggled and wrestled for a little while, forgetting his knife, but, remembering, had drawn it and slit the nimur across the throat, and had carried it seven miles into Jerusalem.

They were also quite ready to listen to the literal fact that his wound healed beautifully, after it had been dressed at the dispensary, largely because he did not smoke tobacco or drink alcohol.

If I may say one word about the method of introduction of this visual teaching plan into the Sunday School, I should advocate its use, first of all, in the teachers' preparation class. Let the scheme be thoroughly mastered and worked out in detail there. Clergy, ministers or Sunday School superintendents and leaders should co-operate to introduce the system in that way to their teachers, and do it in the admirable way advocated by Dr. Forbush in "The Travel

Lessons on the Life of Jesus."

Pictures like that of the gorge of the Brook Cherith in the Plain of Jericho, of the River Jordan, of a bride's arrival before the house of her bridegroom, of the olive trees in Gethsemane, and of the shores and boats of Galilee, have an educational value, and a peculiar value for Sunday School work which can scarcely be overestimated.

In actual class work the Underwood people have arranged their

stereographs to illustrate any lesson course in use. It is not advisable to show scholars more than one or two places (stereographs) at a lesson period, and a few minutes only are required for this. The class should be organised—one boy to control the use of the instrument, others to trace Scripture passages, whilst others should have geographical notes to read dealing with the place to be discussed.

Every encouragement should be given to the children to express themselves regarding the lesson and the details of the stereographed scenes which bear upon it. This demands wise control and the directive influence of the teacher, also some prompting in the first few lessons, but the resulting eagerness and quickening intelligence of the scholars will speedily recompense one.



Ploughing in the East.

Stereograph: Underwood.

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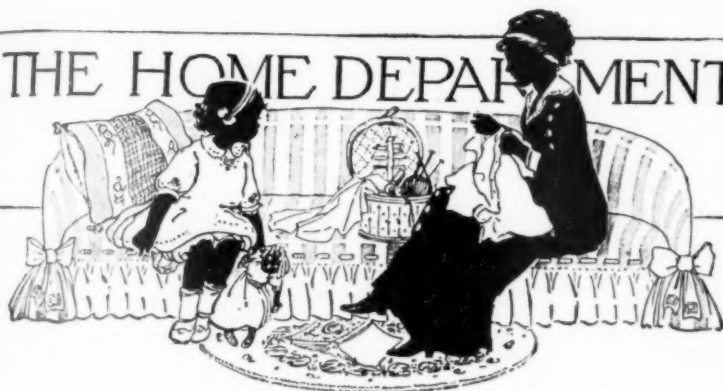


FASHIONS change, habits alter, as the years grow into centuries; and though the love of warmth and light remain, even these are different. The smoky fire and grimy coal are steadily giving place to the clean and pleasant radiance of the more hygienic gas fire, just as the flickering candle gave place to the soft brilliancy of incandescent gas.

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THE HOME DEPARTMENT



CHRISTMAS STUFFINGS AND SAUCES

By BLANCHE ST. CLAIR

IT is extraordinary how very few persons can make either good stuffings or sauces; and yet one or both of these additions, well made, not only render the dish with which they are served more savoury, but also tend to eke out the more expensive fish, meat, or poultry. Thus they enable the harassed housewife to exercise economy, and ensure the approval of the family at one and the same time.

Christmas will soon be upon us, and it is going to be no easy task to provide the customary seasonable foods. But, the prevailing circumstances notwithstanding, most of us can reckon up many blessings, and are ready to thankfully partake of the "Poor Man's Goose" if the real bird is beyond the reach of the contents of the housekeeper's purse. This dish, by the way, is indeed absolutely typical of how stuffing and sauce can make the substitution not only possible, but welcome, always provided that the stuffing and sauce are well made. If, on the other hand, the coarse, unpalatable compound, so frequently met with at tables otherwise appetisingly furnished, is used, not only will the dinner be spoiled, but, and this is more serious, the family will be put "off" other similar attempts at economy.

Now, here is the recipe and, what is far more important, minute directions for making a good common stuffing which is suitable for poultry, veal, and such dishes as stuffed shoulder or breast of mutton.

A Good Common Stuffing

Ingredients.—Four oz. breadcrumbs, the grated rind of half a lemon, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. mixed herbs, $\frac{1}{2}$ teaspoonful salt, $\frac{1}{4}$ teaspoonful pepper, 2 oz. margarine or clarified dripping, yolk of 1 egg.

Every dry ingredient must be reduced almost to powder. This is the chief secret of the delicious delicate stuffings one meets with all over the Continent. The bread must be cut from a loaf at least two days old, and should be first grated, then passed through a sieve. It is best to grate the rind of the lemon on a nutmeg grater. The best combination of herbs for flavouring is two-thirds parsley and the remaining third thyme, but these can be suited to individual taste. Nutmeg, powdered mace, and spices can also be added at discretion. When all the ingredients have been prepared, mix them together, being careful that they are thoroughly incorporated one with the other. Add the fat (cut into small pieces), and the well-beaten yolk of egg. The most satisfactory way of mixing stuffings is to use the hand, but unless the fingers are cool and dry it is better to use a fork.

Forcemeat No. 2

Ingredients.—Four oz. breadcrumbs, 2 oz. lean ham or bacon, 2 oz. margarine or dripping, 1 dessertspoonful mixed herbs, the rind of half a lemon, nutmeg, mace, cayenne and salt to taste, 1 whole egg.

As will be seen from the foregoing ingre-

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dients, this is a more savoury compound than the first stuffing, and is suited better to grown-ups than to children. The meat also makes it more substantial. Prepare the ingredients as for No. 1, exercising the greatest care they are all as finely grated or chopped as they can be. Mix together and bind with a well-beaten egg.

A stuffing of this kind can be used as the foundation for a savoury dish, and either converted into cottage pie (with a top layer of mashed potatoes), a filling for pasties, or formed into rissoles and fried.

Suet Forcemeat

Beef suet is preferable to mutton for this purpose, but best of all is veal kidney suet, which is particularly delicate.

Ingredients.—Six oz. suet (weighed after being skinned and chopped), 8 oz. finest breadcrumbs, 1 large teaspoonful mixed nutmeg, mace and cayenne, 1 large tablespoonful chopped parsley, 1 teaspoonful mixed dry herbs, 1 dessertspoonful grated lemon rind, salt to taste, and 1 egg.

In pre-war times one used two eggs to these quantities, but very nearly as good a result is obtained by making up the necessary amount of liquid in milk. It should also be remembered that the longer an egg is beaten the better the effect. Thus, one egg, beaten for five minutes, is almost as good as two that are hurriedly stirred before they are added to the dry ingredients. Prepare and mix according to the above recipes. These quantities are sufficient to stuff a large joint or bird, and to provide eight to ten small balls for frying.

Sage-and-Onion Stuffing

This is for goose, duck or pork, and is, of course, used in the already mentioned and excellent dish, "Poor Man's Goose."

Ingredients.—Three large Spanish onions, an equal quantity of fine breadcrumbs, 2 level tablespoonfuls powdered sage (or finely chopped if the fresh herb is available), 1 oz. margarine, $\frac{1}{2}$ saltspoonful pepper, and a saltspoonful of salt.

Peel the onions and cook them in fast-boiling salted water for half an hour. Drain thoroughly (otherwise the stuffing will be watery) and chop into small pieces. Mix with equal quantity of breadcrumbs and the other ingredients. In some parts of the country the liver of the goose is

blanched in boiling water, finely shredded and added to the stuffing.

Poor Man's Goose

Take 1 lb. of steak, cut evenly and not more than $\frac{1}{2}$ in. thick. Beat with a wooden meat beater for one minute to break down the fibres and make the meat tender. Spread the stuffing over the upper surface, roll, and tie securely with tapes or strings. Spread a layer of dripping or bacon fat over the top and put more fat in the baking tin. Cook in a hot oven for three-quarters to one hour according to the thickness of the roll. The "goose" must be well basted and served with thick brown gravy. Some people like apple sauce with this dish.

French Stuffing

It is rather pleasant to get away from the accustomed groove at times, and to serve a new accompaniment to a well-known dish.

The favourite French and Swiss stuffing for a goose is made by mixing coarsely chopped apple with French plums (or the Californian plums, which are, nowadays, the universal substitute). The plums are previously soaked, stoned and cut into quarters.

Chestnut Stuffing

There are two ways of making chestnut stuffing:

1. When chestnuts are combined with veal stuffing.

2. When they are mixed with equal parts of sausage meat.

No. 1.—Take about three dozen chestnuts, blanch, and remove the skins and inner husks. Stew in a little good brown gravy till tender. Chop coarsely, and mix with equal parts of veal stuffing.

No. 2.—Boil three to four dozen chestnuts till they are floury. Remove the peels and husks, and mix with 1 lb. of sausage meat. Flavour with salt and pepper. The Italian chestnuts, which are large and have dull skins, are best for making stuffings.

It is very probable that many of my readers will find nothing new in these recipes as regards the actual ingredients. They may not, however, be satisfied with the results they obtain. As already mentioned, the reason for failure is almost certain to lie in the fact that the ingredients are not rendered sufficiently fine before they are mixed together, or that the flavourings are

CHRISTMAS STUFFINGS AND SAUCES

added haphazard, a proceeding which, sooner or later, is sure to land the cook in trouble.

Sauces

Let us first consider bread sauce, which is most in demand at this season. Bread sauce, as all my readers know, can be very nice or very nasty according to the person who makes it.

Rub enough stale bread through a sieve to produce half-pint of fine crumbs. Put these into a basin and pour over boiling milk to just cover them. A generous half-pint will usually suffice. Add one small skinned onion and four to six peppercorns. Cover the basin with a saucer and stand it in a hot oven. Stir occasionally. At the end of half an hour remove the onion and peppercorns, flavour with salt, and add 1 oz. of margarine cut in small pieces. Stir till the fat has melted and become mixed with the sauce, then turn into a hot tureen or put back into the oven to keep hot whilst dishing up.

This method is, to my mind, preferable to cooking the sauce in a saucepan, for it allows the fine crumbs to absorb the milk slowly without becoming lumpy and stodgy.

Apple Sauce

Here again I prefer oven cooking to the more rapid saucepan, and if it is not convenient to stew the fruit at the same time that the meat or bird is baking, the sauce can be prepared over-night and re-heated when required.

Select 2 lb. good cooking apples. Peel, core, and cut into pieces. Put into a small casserole with three tablespoonfuls of water and 1 oz. margarine. Cover closely and cook until the apples are reduced to a smooth pulp. Stir in brown sugar to taste, but remember that apple sauce should be pleasantly acid and not the *compote* which so often is served under this name.

A Delicious Christmas Pudding Sauce

Ingredients.—Melt 1 oz. cooking margarine in a small saucepan. Lift the pan on to the table and work in, with a wooden spoon, $\frac{1}{2}$ oz. sieved flour. Stir the paste over the fire for one minute, then add, by degrees, $\frac{1}{2}$ pint cold water. Stir until the sauce has boiled for three minutes. Flavour with nutmeg, vanilla or any other approved essence. Just before serving stir in the well-beaten yolk of an egg.

A WHISPER OF PEACE

A Christmas Carol for 1916

THERE'S a whisper of Peace to-night, to-night!
A whisper from long ago,
When the Shepherds gazed on a glorious sight
In the heavens all aglow.
Oh, tender the Babe, and the Cross of pain
Is the load that He must bear!
But the Manger Bed is the world's great gain,
And the glory of God was there.

Oh! Lord of Love and Light,
Come to this world below,
Make us to worship Thee to-night
As the Shepherds of long ago.

There's a whisper of Peace to-night, to night!
A flutter of angels' wings,
A whisper that tells of dawning light
In the East where the Day Star springs.
Oh! dark was the night, and the storms beat high
Over a war-worn world;
But the hope gleams out of a brighter sky
And the banner of Peace unfurled.

Oh! Lord of earth and heaven,
Come to this world of woe,
May God's goodwill to man be given
And Peace like a river flow!

There's a whisper of Peace to-night, to-night!
In the hearts of those who weep:
It breathes a hope from the heavenly height
O'er the graves where the fallen sleep.
We see them no more, and they may not share
The prize for which they strove,
But we know they have joy beyond compare
In the angel-courts above.

Oh! Lord of Light and Life,
Bring us to that glad shore,
Where those we love, set free from strife,
Praise Thee for evermore!

MARY BRADFORD WHITING.



"He gazed down the table at his brother as he slowly raised his left hand. It was ringless!"—p. 193.

Drawn by
W. H. Hoagland.

THE BLACK OPAL

By
Helen Wallace

I

"THIS a rare good sight to see old England again!" exclaimed Dick Leigh, as he leaned his elbows on the rail and gazed shorewards.

H.M.S. *Arethusa*, a sixty-gun frigate, was howling up the broad, blue Sound, every stitch in her vast spread of sail drawing taut in the morning breeze, and gleaming white in the morning sun. On she came under her towering mass of snowy canvas with the grace and ease of some swift sea-bird—a glorious sight of which steam and science have robbed the world for ever.

With every flashing dip of her prow, the shore was drawing nearer. There were the shining sands of Cawsand Bay, the green glory of the Mount Edgcumbe woods, the familiar town under its blue haze of smoke, the lofty plateau of The Hoe with its famous memories. And perhaps as his eyes rested on it, Dick, modest lad though he was, may have thought that he and his shipmates, with their five years' cruise behind them, and their record of French ships sunk, or sent home under prize crews, had at least not disgraced the memory of the mighty seamen who had gaily played out their game of bowls there before sailing forth to come to death grips with the great Armada.

It was rare good luck, too, that a favouring wind should have brought the *Arethusa* home just on the eve of his own and Ambrose's twenty-first birthday. Ambrose would, of course, be making great preparations to celebrate it, and with a sailor's characteristic generosity, Dick had already invited all the younger officers to the ex-

pected festivities on the morrow. He was burning with impatience to see Ambrose and the old place again, and as soon as the sails were furled and the anchor chains had roared through the hawse pipes, he sought, and was granted, a few hours' leave.

Yes, it was good to be home again, good to bestride a horse once more, even though it was but a hired nag, he thought, as he trotted inland towards Leighlands. If only Ambrose had been riding beside him, it would have been like the old times again when they had raced their ponies together through the deep lanes or over the open moor. But Ambrose would have his hands full in view of to-morrow, and, of course, he couldn't know when the *Arethusa* would cast anchor.

Ah, those old times, what good times they had been! Dick was back in them again, the dignity of his all but twenty-one years and the glory of his new lieutenancy forgotten for the moment. Save for a distant kinsman, Sir Rion Leigh, the head of the elder branch of the family, the young Leighs were practically alone in the world. Their mother they had never known, their father had died when they were little more than children, and the twin brothers had been all in all to each other, though in dispositions and tastes they had been very dissimilar. Ambrose, the elder, was a dreamy, bookish lad, given to quaint out-of-the-way studies. Had it not been for Dick's love of the open air and of outdoor sports, Ambrose would have spent his days in the great library poring over books.

And as the years passed their careers and characters had diverged more and more. Ambrose, by virtue of his few minutes'

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seniority, was the Squire of Leighlands, of its broad acres and the grand old house. Dick, like many another son of Devon, had early heard the call of the sea. In those days, with Napoleon across the Channel, waiting like a tiger *couchant* for his long-dreamed-of pounce upon the English shores, the British navy was a hard-worked service, and since Dick had joined when a mere boy, the brothers had met but seldom.

Still, time and absence had failed to weaken the old strong affection, and that strange bond, rooted in the mysterious depths of nature, which often unites twin spirits; and now Dick urged his horse through the winding lanes as eagerly as a lover might, hastening to a tryst with his mistress.

There it was at last! And with quickened breath and kindling eyes, Dick checked his horse for a moment, as he gazed at the old grey pile, lording it over the rolling country, and the leafy combs, and backed by the broad russet sweep of the moor, the saw-like edge of a granite tor, clear-cut here and there against the deep burning blue of the September sky.

Hey for home and Ambrose! Dear old fellow, how glad he would be to see him again! And Dick set his horse to a canter. Here was the entrance to the park at last, but the great floriated iron gates, surmounted by the lion of the Leighs, were closed, and as his shouts failed to bring anyone from the lodge, which seemed empty, he had perforce to dismount and open the heavy gates for himself. It was the first check upon his ardent mood, and as he drew nearer the house the chill deepened. Under the broad, mellow autumn sunshine a strange silence and melancholy seemed to brood over it. The Italian garden beneath the terrace looked empty and neglected. The long rows of mullioned windows were mostly shuttered up.

Dick stared in dismay. It was ages since he had had a letter from Ambrose. A frigate on active service did not often pick up a mail; still, if anything had happened he would have heard of it in town at the "Royal George." But what could have happened? His heart was in his mouth, as he would have phrased it, as he rang the bell at the main entrance where the big double-leaved doors used always to stand hospitably open. The

clanging echoes of his peal had time to die out before the door was opened by the old house steward himself, a dignitary who used to have half a dozen underlings to perform such duties.

"Hallo, Tucker!" exclaimed Dick, surprised, but the old man was too overjoyed to see "Master Dick" to utter anything coherent for a few moments.

"Eh, it's high time you were to home, Master Dick, and it's glad I am to see you. Please God, we'll have the old times back again now." Then in answer to Dick's urgency: "Well you see, sir, Mr. Ambrose [to any other one his young master would have been 'Squire'] hasn't been quite himself for this good while back, always in the library, and his nose for ever in a book; 'tain't good for anyone, and ne'er a soul here but Sir Rion; but now that you're home again, I hope you'll rouse him up a bit, sir."

"Sir Rion!" echoed Dick in surprise. "Why he hardly ever came here as far as I remember. Though I was once or twice there when I was a little chap, we never had much to do with the Annerly Leighs."

"You may say so, Master Dick, but he and Mr. Ambrose have got pretty thick of late; but now that you're home, we'll be all right again, and I hope King George will let you bide to home now, for I'm sure you and the *Arcthusa* have done more than your share."

Dick cut the old man short in the midst of his congratulations and hurried down the hall to the library—a vast room with a lofty, vaulted roof and a great three-light Norman window at the eastern end. In far back days it had been the chapel of the house, but a book-loving Leigh in Queen Anne's time had turned it into the library, and his successors had added to its treasures. In spite of the tall window, the room, save in the morning, was rather gloomy, and the sombre bindings of the endless rows of old books did not tend to brighten it.

At Dick's hasty entrance, a tall slight young man rose from the desk over which he had been stooping, and then with an exclamation between wonder and relief, hastened towards him. The two brothers locked hands, and for a long minute there was silence. They were both too thoroughly English to put into words what each was feeling, if indeed they could have done so.

THE BLACK OPAL

"I'm so thankful to see you!" said Ambrose at last, on the rise of a deep-drawn breath.

"And I you!" echoed Dick. "But, my dear old man, there's not much sign of it," with a laugh. "Didn't you expect me? Have you forgotten what to-morrow is? I thought it would be a case of 'dress ship'—flags flying, oxen roasted whole, spigots running wine, tenantry in their Sunday best and all smiles—why, I've invited half the ship to share in the fun! Instead of that one would think there's to be a funeral in the house rather than a double birthday—and a coming of age at that." The words were uttered between jest and earnest.

"There may be one like enough," said Ambrose in a low voice.

"What do you mean—what's the matter?" exclaimed Dick sharply, and as his brother turned and the light from the tall window fell full on his face, he caught his breath.

The two young men, as is often the case with twins, had a strong likeness to each other, not only in feature but in voice and manner and air. They were both tall and slight and had the same fair colouring, but Dick, bronzed and ruddy and vigorous with sun and sea, suggested a fresh breezy morning full of hope and promise, while Ambrose, wan and blanched, was like some pale sunless evening fading imperceptibly into night. Dick's eyes, and here was the only point of contrast, were blue—a sunny sea-blue when all was well, but steel-blue, like the flash of a sword blade, when his anger or the fighting instinct within him was roused, as those who had seen him, cutlass in hand leading a boarding party, well knew. Ambrose's were a soft, melancholy, wistful brown, like some forest pool in whose depths the dead leaves lie. But even yet, in a dim light which did not reveal the tell-tale difference of the eyes, the one would readily have been mistaken for the other.

"What's the matter?" repeated Dick, gazing anxiously into those clouded eyes.

"Just what I say. There may be a funeral here soon—*will* be rather. I am truly thankful you have got home in time. I was writing some directions for you, and trying to put things in order in case I didn't see you again."

"Didn't see me again!" repeated Dick, his jaw falling. "You do look miserably peaked, old man, but—but—"

"But I don't expect to survive to-morrow night," said Ambrose quite quietly, as if stating some accepted fact.

Dick uttered an inarticulate sound, a snort of mingled wrath and derision and dismay.

"Come, old man, you don't expect me to swallow that. You've been too much alone. You need me to stir you up, and I'm here now to do it. Come out into the sun and wind and get the cobwebs swept out of your brain—"

"Did you never hear the family legend that if twins were born at Leighlands the elder would die before his twenty-first birthday was over—"

"Never heard a word of it," said Dick stoutly. But Ambrose went on:

"Sir Rion Leigh, whose elder brother, the crusader, never returned from the East, as you know, was supposed to have made away with his twin nephews who stood between him and the succession to the estate, and their mother, when she was dying, claimed in revenge for her two sons the elder of any twins who ever after might be born—"

"Fudge—what's a legend?" said Dick. "Didn't the lady want both twins when she was at it? You don't believe such stuff?"

"Our father must have believed it, for old Tucker let it out just after you sailed on this cruise," went on Ambrose in the same level voice. "Poor old fellow, he was ready to bite out his tongue afterwards. He admitted that our father had left strict commands that we should not know of it, though I'd have found it out soon enough from the family records, of which I've been making a study. I've not the least doubt that that was why my father, when he gave me the Leigh ring—the black opal—on his deathbed, told me I must never let it off my finger. You know it's supposed to ensure good luck and long life to the wearer, and the Annery Leighs believe that their branch of the family has declined ever since Sir Rion's grandfather gambled it away to ours."

Dick gazed at the curious ring on Ambrose's forefinger. In an antique setting of dull gold, there glowed that rarest of gems—a black opal—black indeed in some lights, but with a strange, lambent restless flame playing in its depths—a weird, uncanny stone. He knew it, of course, and its story well, and had always seen it on

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his father's hand. He stared in perplexity into Ambrose's face. Was he in earnest, did he really believe all this? Then he broke into a great laugh.

"If the Annery Leighs hadn't followed their grandfather's example too well, the loss of their ring wouldn't have ruined them, and from all accounts Sir Rion's a chip of the old block. I shouldn't wonder if he's been helping to cram this nonsense into your head—"

"Sir Rion!" exclaimed Ambrose with sudden vehemence, and then as swiftly he checked himself. Whatever he might have been about to say remained unsaid.

"Not that I know anything about the man," went on Dick carelessly, "except what report says. There are plenty I know who swear by him, but Annery has never been too friendly to Leighlands. Look here, Ambrose," he went on more earnestly, "it's just what I say. You've let the place run to seed. You've seen nobody, you've shut yourself up with these musty books till you've got the vapours. You're as pale as a ghost or a tallow candle, but you're no more likely to die to-morrow than I am, and I don't know who's likely to kill you, unless Sir Rion follows his namesake's example. It would be to his advantage if we were out of the way, but he'd have to get rid of me first," with another laugh. "Now, put all this old rubbish out of your head—no, I'm not going to look at any 'directions' or listen to any last words—there's no need. Come back with me to Plymouth. Since I can't ask my shipmates here to-morrow, we'll have a jolly night at the 'Royal George,' and at twelve o'clock we'll drink each other's health and wish each other long life, and laugh at old legends and old curses."

Dick reasoned and ridiculed, laughed and expostulated with Ambrose as to his "monstrous delusion," till at last he wrung from him a consent to meet him at Plymouth the following afternoon; but all his urging could not avail to persuade his brother to return with him at once. Ambrose declared that he had urgent business to which he must attend before leaving Leighlands next day; it might even keep him late. Not all Dick's entreaties could move him. The afternoon was waning, Dick's leave was running out. After a hearty "See you to-morrow, then,"

to Ambrose, and a hasty anxious conference with old Tucker, he had to go.

He paused at the spot where he had first caught sight of the old house and looked back. The glory of the day was gone. A grey mist was creeping down from the moor, brooding like a pall over house and tree and field, and over Dick's mind a cloud of vague doubt and alarm had spread, quenching all his joyous ardour. Of course, it was all a maggot of Ambrose's brain; he was hipped with over-study; nothing could happen before to-morrow; but—but—

Then he shook his reins impatiently and pushed his nag townwards. He must not exceed his leave—that, at least, was clear.

II

THE Red Room, the best room of the "Royal George," was ablaze with light and resounding with young, eager voices. The sparkling mass of candles in the sconces along the crimson walls shone down on the long table, bright with glittering glass and massive silver, which would be the envy of many a collector to-day. For mine host had not needed any spurring to put his best foot foremost. Every sailor was a hero in these days; how much more, then, the officers of a crack frigate like the *Arethusa*. And besides, was not the young host a Leigh of Leighlands, for whom the landlord had a good old-fashioned respect? It was evidently not only in the decking of the table that he had done his best. The savoury odours which were wafted from the back regions suggested that the cook was on her mettle too, and whetted the hearty appetites of lusty young men, who for weeks back had had to content themselves with duff and salt junk, for there were few luxuries even on His Majesty's ships in those days.

"Gad, Dick, we're so sharp set that you'd better have supper in, in case when that loitering brother of yours comes we fall on him and devour him," exclaimed one tall young fellow.

"By George, yes!" cried another. "Talk of a bad quarter of an hour. I haven't put in a worse one since we sailed out of the Sound five years ago."

"Right!" said Dick. "We've given him law enough. He'll only have himself to

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blame if he finds nothing but bones to pick." Then with a shout of "Supper!" to the landlord, who had been hovering anxiously in the doorway, he led the way to the table.

For a time everyone was too occupied to speak, and Dick busied himself loading the plates and filling the glasses of those nearest to him. It had been impossible for him to leave the ship till nightfall. The crew were being paid off, and there was endless business to be attended to. In the morning a sense of duty had made him send an express to Sir Rion Leigh at his old house of Annery on the Cornish side of the Sound. "If Ambrose has made it up with him, I suppose I must," he thought, but he was rather relieved when later in the day his messenger returned with a letter from Sir Rion full of courteous regrets that he could not join the birthday supper. "H'm, we can do very well without him," had been Dick's inward comment, and then he had forgotten all about him, for as the afternoon waned, and still there was no sign of Ambrose, his anxiety had grown with every hour.

Now as he sat looking down the long, shining table to the empty chair at the other end, that anxiety had become a devouring torment. What had happened at Leighlands? Had what he had scoffed at as Ambrose's delusion proved to be too true a foreboding? No, he would not, he dare not, think that. Meantime he had his guests to consider. He must not cloud their first night ashore, and after all a dozen things might have kept Ambrose at Leighlands. A man with the vapours was not to be depended on, so he tried to comfort himself.

To mask his growing dread he assumed an extravagant gaiety, rattling out a stream of reckless talk till the room rang with laughter. At last the table was cleared and the cloth drawn, and it only remained for the toasts to be honoured in the usual fashion.

The guests were in the highest spirits. One toast quickly followed another, till when "King and Country," "The Fleet and the Army," "Success to our Arms," and "Confusion to Boney" had been drunk with acclamation, there rose a clamour for the toast of the evening—the health of the hosts.

"Though there's only one of 'em here,

we can drink for two," cried one with a laugh.

Regardless of Dick's "Stop—wait!" the company were on their feet.

"Yes, let's drink his health. If anything 'll fetch him, surely that will," cried another. "Here's to Ambrose——"

The door suddenly opened, bringing a waft of chill air into the heated room. Ambrose Leigh entered, and without pausing for apology or greeting, walked swiftly to the empty chair at the head of the table. Reaching it, he stood for a moment in the full light, a tall, slim, graceful figure in his gala suit of plum colour. But no man noted it, nor that the snowy foam of cambric ruffles at throat and breast were disordered and stained. They had eyes for naught but his face, so wild, so wan, so distraught was it, as he gazed down the table at his brother, a desperate, tragic appeal in the clouded brown eyes, and slowly raised his left hand. It was ringless!

The hand dropped. Then—he was gone! Gone utterly—vanished! The chair was still empty, there was no one standing beside it.

For a long moment the young men stood as if struck to stone, the lifted glasses still held on high, while again that strange chill seemed to pass over them, stopping their breath and turning the hot leaping blood to ice in their veins. Slowly, slowly, the brimming glasses were lowered, and each man, flushed with good cheer a moment ago, stared ghastly pale at the other in doubt and dismay and horror. *What had they seen?* For that they had seen it could not be denied.

"Did you see—on his ruffles—was it—was it blood?" muttered someone in a thick, faint voice; and as if at the breaking of a spell, Dick Leigh started to life again.

"You saw—you all saw"—he uttered in a voice which none would have known as his had they not seen his lips move. "I saw my brother yesterday. He had a foreboding of this, and, God forgive me for a fool, I laughed at him. I believe he has been foully murdered. I believe he has come here to claim vengeance, and, so help me God, he shall have it, whoever the murderer be. Here I swear it!"

He snatched his sword from its sheath and held it high, his eyes gleaming in his white set face as steel-bright and steel-hard as the drawn blade which he held aloft as

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if invoking Heaven as his witness, while a low stern murmur of approval passed round the table.

III

LIKE the swift, sudden change of a dream, the Red Room with its warm glow of light had vanished, and Dick Leigh found himself galloping towards Leighlands in the white light of the high sailing harvest moon, his brother's white face ever before him. And soon it was before him in reality. The slight young body had been lifted from the library floor to a couch.

"But that's all I did till you would see him, Master Dick," Tucker had faltered as Dick put the old man gently aside.

His strange foreboding terribly fulfilled, there Ambrose lay, as he had appeared in the Red Room, in his plum-coloured suit, and now Dick saw more plainly the dark ominous stains on the full ruffles. The heavy white lids were closed over the dark anguish of the eyes—that was the only change. With a stern, set face, Dick raised the lifeless hand. As he had expected—the black opal was gone! The frills at the throat he now noticed were torn as if some ornament had been wrenched away—the diamond brooch likely enough, which had been a family heirloom. The room was disordered, too—drawers turned out as if they had been ransacked, papers scattered about.

Had it been the work of some robber intent only on gain? Dick questioned, as with hard, dry eyes he gazed down on his brother's face, now slowly settling to the last profound peace. Old Tucker, blind with grief, could throw little light upon it.

"I didn't need your warning, Master Dick. I knew what was in his mind," he faltered.

From his story Dick learned that Ambrose had seemed uneasy and unsettled all day, but had at last prepared to start for Plymouth. Then he had apparently suddenly changed his mind, had sent his horse back to the stables, saying he might ride into town later, but meantime he must not be disturbed—on no account must anyone come near the library. Evening had deepened into night and still the door remained locked. From the dim glimmer through the stained glass of the window, it was plain a lamp had been lighted, but that was the only sign of life. At last the old man, desperate with

dread, had got ladders, and, with the help of the few men about the place, had forced an entrance through the lofty window, to find—"What you see, sir," choking down a sob.

"What about the priest's door?" asked Dick.

"I tried it, of course, Master Dick, though it's always locked, and Mr. Ambrose, you know, keeps the key."

"The priest's door" was a low narrow door, which opened out directly on to the terrace. When the chapel had been converted into a library it had been masked by a set of dummy shelves, which opened like an inner door, and, when closed, showed no break in the long serried rows of books. The ordinary door leading into the house had been found still locked and with the key inside, and there was no other exit but the priest's door, and the window through which entrance had been gained with such difficulty.

"He must have stolen Mr. Ambrose's key," suggested Tucker.

Dick nodded. And yet that would presuppose a knowledge of the house, which very few had, for the existence of the hidden door was known only to the family and one or two trusted servants like Tucker.

"But how he ever got in, or how he ever got away, passes me," wailed the old man, "for I was in the corridor or out on the terrace half the night, and the moon as bright as day."

Dick had no solution to offer. With the old man's aid he carried tenderly to his brother's room the limp body which an hour or two ago had been Ambrose.

Then he returned to the library, locked the door again upon himself, and looked round him with burning eyes. The great dim room, the long rows of books, the tossed papers swam before him in a crimson haze. At that moment his one earthly desire was to come to grips with the wretch who had slain Ambrose, and to crush the life out of him. No swift death for him! But who was that man and how was he to be found?

Had the circumstances been different, Dick might have feared suicide, for it seemed to him that Ambrose's mind must have become partially unhinged under the burden of the morbid dread which had possessed him and which had been so

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terribly fulfilled. The isolation in which he had been living, the few old servants alone retained at Leighlands, the neglected state of the place, all seemed to point in that direction.

"His nose always in a book, and never a scul here but Sir Rion," had been Tucker's words.

Sir Rion! Dick pondered the name for a while and tried to recall what he knew of his kinsman. Since when a boy he had entered the navy as a midshipman he had not seen Sir Rion Leigh, and only in very rare glimpses before then. He could only remember vaguely a very magnificent gentleman, who had naturally taken scant notice of a small boy. Why Sir Rion had chosen to renew close relations with Leighlands, since Ambrose was not likely to have made the first move, Dick could not guess. Sir Rion would know of the existence of the priest's door, but what of that? To have a vague prejudice against an almost unknown man is one thing, to suspect him of a foul and brutal murder is quite another. Sir Rion was a kinsman, a Leigh, an honourable gentleman before the world; the thing was impossible—so impossible that if it even crossed Dick's mind, it was only to be dismissed at once. It couldn't be!

Meantime what of possible traces of the murderer? Dick examined the priest's door, and found that while the outer door was still locked, doubtless by the fugitive when escaping, the inner masking door opened almost at a touch. The spring was well oiled, not stiff and rusty from disuse, as he remembered it. The door must have been frequently used, then. Had Ambrose chosen to take this short cut to the open air, or—? Conjecture failed.

Dick came back to the table and began gathering together the scattered papers. Ambrose had said, he recalled now, that he was writing some directions for him, and he sought eagerly for them, but there was no trace of them. The ransacked drawers and secretaires had evidently been turned out in a fury of haste by someone desperately bent on finding something—more valuables, of course; yet as Dick boiled on, a doubt began to grow. These were not likely places for an ordinary robber's booty to be found, and unless the confusion had been created as a mere blind, the miscreant must have been seeking some-

thing else. But what? The papers were chiefly on estate business or old documents and letters. Dick paused and pondered. Could the unknown man who had entered and left by the masked door have been seeking something else than diamond or opal—something that would only be kept in the most secret receptacle?

Then in a flash Dick remembered how, coming into the library when children, Ambrose and he had found their father, whose last illness was already weighing upon him, standing before the great chimney-piece with a flap open, showing a little recess behind what they had always supposed to be solid carving. He had cried out with a child's interest in such a discovery, and their father had spoken to them gravely, "as if we were grown up," as the boys had said to each other afterwards. He had told them he kept his most precious possessions there; Dick believed it was their young dead mother's letters and relics, but in view of the future, he said, he would entrust them with the secret of the panel, which none save the head of the house ever knew, and had shown them how to release the spring. Some weeks later Eustace Leigh had died, leaving a packet marked "To be buried with me," and when the boys with bated breath had ventured to open the panel, the recess was empty.

One lives fast in youth, and after a few adventurous years the incident to Dick seemed buried in the far past. Now he recalled it, to ask: Could that "something" for which the murderer had been seeking be hid in this secret place? Though what Ambrose could have to conceal so carefully passed Dick's imagining. That question could at least be easily answered. Lamp in hand he strode over to the chimney-piece. On the centre panel the lion of the Leighs was carved in high relief, and under one fierce, uplifted paw Dick fumbled for a time, pressing now here, now there, for the hidden spring. With a click the flap fell at last, revealing not emptiness, but a small pile of papers.

With a leap of his pulses, Dick drew the packet out. What had he found? Would this strange discovery aid him to his just vengeance? God grant it might! He glanced through the papers with a look of deepening bewilderment, then he carried them back to the table and sat doggedly down to the study of them. His lamp was

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still burning when the dawn crept in, pale and spectral, through the tall Norman window.

IV

"WHY—why, you must be little Di Cary!" said Dick Leigh.

"And if I were, sir, I think the point is that I am *little* Di Cary no longer."

"I vow I beg you a thousand pardons, madam," exclaimed Dick with a prodigious sweep of his cap; and then both the young people laughed. Laughed? Yes, for the first time for days Dick's laugh rang out light-hearted and whole-hearted as of yore. He was back in old times for the moment, for he had just been vouchsafed a vision which had blotted out the gulf that yawned between those days and now.

The old house of Annery was perched like a watch-tower on the cliff edge. From the balustrade of the terrace Dick could have lightly tossed a stone far out into the wide waters of the Channel, rolling in, a sea of fire from the burning west. And as he had loitered there waiting for his host, round the angle of the house into the sunset glow there stepped a tall girl, who to the young man's eyes seemed to focus and embody all the splendour of sun and sea and sky. She carried her tricorne riding hat in her hand, and her hair, the glossy red-brown of a ripe horse-chestnut when it bursts its prickly envelope, shone a ruddy glory round the high-carried head. Her eyes were a warm brown too, with a keen, lively sparkle in their depths, blazing out in moments of excitement into a sudden flame that seemed reflected in her face, which, privet-white at other times, would then show the faintest flush of rose.

When not in the cold white light of the moon, but in the warm magic glamour of the sunset, such a Diana descended upon a poor mortal, what could an unexpected Endymion do but stare amazed?

"I see you have quite forgotten me. I ought to be monstrous piqued," she said with a smile as sweet and frank as her voice, and which completed Dick's overthrow.

Then he had collected himself. Of course he had heard of Miss Cary, Sir Rion's ward. This must be she—the wealthy orphan, whom rumour said Sir Rion was to marry and so mend his fortunes. Cary! In a flash had come back a vision of a little red-haired girl, who, on their very rare visits

to Annery, used to scamper with him and Ambrose round the place whenever she could escape from her *gouvernante*. So he had blurted out his blunt recognition, though it was hard to associate this Diana Cary, this fair young madam with the air of a goddess and the port of a queen, with little Di Cary, their playmate on sufferance in the old days.

Perhaps Miss Cary divined his thoughts—no difficult matter.

"I dare say I am a good deal changed," she said demurely, "so I shall not take it amiss that I am the one to remember. I have not been sailing the seas, taking ships and winning battles. Oh, how I wish I had—how I envy you," her voice suddenly breaking from its light tone to passionate earnestness. "But though I'm only a girl I'm not a sailor's daughter for nothing. I've had to stay quietly at home," with a wry grimace, "so I've had more time to remember the days when I used to shock Miss Wheeler vastly by behaving so ungenteelly, as she declared; but I never had the chance of a good romp except with you and your brother Ambrose—"

Diana stopped abruptly at the change in the young man's face. Somehow the utterance of his brother's name broke the intoxicating dream. His eyes and mouth hardened. Diana felt that she was touching tragedy.

"I ought not to have spoken of him—not so lightly at least," she said softly. "I remember when the news of my father's death came, though I was only a child then. I can be proud now that he died gloriously for his country at Nelson's side, but then I could only feel the loss—the bitter loss"—and Dick found a firm but gentle hand in his for a moment.

He clasped it tight. "Why should you not speak of him? He is never out of my thoughts," said Dick, his voice deep and low with earnestness. "Tell me, if your father, instead of dying nobly, had been foully struck down on his own hearth—what would you have done—what would you have felt?"

"That I had no right to live unless I avenged him!" exclaimed Diana, the glow of ardent vivifying emotion enkindling her beauty.

"I knew it!" exclaimed Dick triumphantly.

"Though 'tis not very Christian, some

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would say"—added Diana with a change of voice, and drawing away her hand—"still—"

"So you have made acquaintance. You must have made good progress if you have got to discussing theology. I did not know you were an authority there, Di," said a fresh voice, as Sir Rion Leigh sauntered up to them.

A man of some thirty-five years or so, he was in the ripe prime of his splendid manhood. That he was handsome was the least of it. Face and voice and bearing alike bore the stamp of race and breeding, and the marks of wide and varied experience too. A man not only of the world, but of the great world, his look and air proclaimed him—a man whose appearance in any company seemed at once to reduce the other members to insignificance. And since this is an imperfect world the dominating charm and power of his personality were to many rather enhanced by the dash of recklessness in his manner, which did not belie the rumours floating around his name, nor the reputation of "the wild Leighs," as his branch of the family was known. Especially among the younger men and with many women, he was the most popular man in the county. "He could do anything he chose," was the general verdict. He was known to be ambitious, and that he had not already restored his diminished fortunes was set down to the very versatility of his talents. A formidable rival—a foe to be dreaded—should he choose to play either part, so Sir Rion Leigh might have been summed up as he stood debonair and smiling in the fading sun-glow.

"I would have you mark, sir, that I was not giving my own opinion, but only quoting a very safe authority—'some would say,'" said Diana lightly. "Besides, Mr. Dick Leigh and I did not need to make acquaintance. We are acquaintances—old acquaintances."

"Aye, to be sure, Dick was here once or twice as a youngster," Sir Rion said easily. "Why it wasn't oftener I don't know. There are few enough of us Leighs left now, more's the pity—all the more reason why Leighlands and Annery should hold together. To my mind no Englishman should have a private feud or quarrel nowadays, not even an inherited one," smiling. "But I think Dick has found

that we are harmless folk enough, and I hope he feels that he is welcome at Annery."

Dick bowed, but rather stiffly, as if he were saluting on the *Arethusa's* quarter-deck. Sir Rion's graceful, fluent ease usually had the effect of reducing the young man to silence. He would have liked now to suggest that since he had seen Diana he had no greater desire than to be welcomed at Annery, but though nimble-witted enough at other times, he did not see his way to turn a compliment, worthy as it seemed to him of the occasion, so he perforce held his peace.

"I am glad to learn at least that you are not forsaking us," went on Sir Rion. "I do not wonder that you are not inclined to settle down at Leighlands meantime," and the clear, high-bred voice softened most winningly, "but a young man of spirit would hardly be likely to do that in these times. I feared we might hear that you were off on another long cruise again, but I've just learned that we stay-at-homes are to have the benefit. Our worthy Plymouth townfolk and their good wives should sleep well o' nights now, though I fear you'll find your new post rather dull after your opportunities on the *Arethusa*."

"I had my reasons for offering for the post," said Dick rather curtly, and then in answer to the question in Diana's eyes: "I applied for the command of the guardship in the harbour and have been accepted—"

"And a great honour at your years, if one may be permitted to refer to them," put in Sir Rion graciously.

"I do not wish to leave the country meantime, but I can't give up the sea," Dick added simply, his eyes still on Diana. If he had looked for a flash of approval from them he was not disappointed.

"I am heartily glad to hear it, though 'tis only what I should have expected," she said warmly. "And if you should find it dull in port, why your friends must e'en try to help you to hear it, though Cousin Lucy would tell me that I am too forth-putting, and should have left that speech to her. No doubt she'll make it much more properly by and by. But—speak of angels—here she is."

As Diana spoke, a tall slim lady appeared at a long, mullioned casement close by and tapped lightly on the glass.

"If I'm not a pattern of all the pro-

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prieties—and I fear I'm not," said Diana with a gay smile at Sir Rion, "it isn't Cousin Lucy's fault. Well, poor dear, I shan't try her patience any longer," and gathering up her flowing riding skirt she opened the long casement and stepped lightly into the room beyond.

Was it because the sun was down or because Diana had disappeared that to Dick the world seemed suddenly to have become grey and cold?

"Shall we follow her?" said Sir Rion with an indulgent smile. "And I shall present you duly to Cousin Lucy Aylmer, who is good enough to look after my madcap ward and me, and vows she has her hands full enough at times. She'll endorse Di's invitation with all the proper forms, as I do *sans cérémonie*, but for Cousin Lucy's sake we'll take a more conventional way in."

He led the way around the house to the great door, and Dick gladly followed. He would see Diana Cary again. For the moment his thoughts and wishes went no farther.

V

AND up in his big tapestried room at night her presence was still with him.

For the first time since Ambrose had appeared in the Red Room and struck the revelry dumb, it was not his brother's dead, white face which haunted Dick's thoughts. He was seeing instead a girl in a white brocade gown sitting at her harpsichord, the lighted candles making a halo round her bright head, and bringing it into high relief against the dark oak panelling. After supper they had spent the evening in Diana's special sitting-room—the Oak Parlour, as it was known—the room at whose window Miss Aylmer had appeared. Dick had been duly presented to her, but to him she was a mere vague shadow, soon swallowed up in his one pre-occupation—Diana. He did not know yet what had happened to him—that love had entered in and taken possession—that at its high bidding he had laid his hot young heart, all his hopes, his life itself, at the feet of Diana Cary in that moment when she had stepped into the sunset glow. He would soon learn.

Meantime he sat as in a dream, recalling her every word and look: the poise of her head as she sang, the curve of her full

white throat, the light straying of her fingers over the tinkling keys. And in that dream he lived and moved as the glowing autumn days slipped by. He tried to fight against it, but the youth in him revolted. For the time he was newborn into a new world. He walked and rode with Diana, explored the cliffs and beaches with her, and evening after evening was spent in the Oak Parlour.

True, Sir Rion was usually of the party, and always with them in the evening, and as each day passed Dick found himself more passionately rebelling against that rumour which assigned Sir Rion and his ward to each other. It was like enough, and they would make a noble couple, he forced himself to admit, though half consciously he began to measure himself against this formidable kinsman. At times he felt a mere raw boy beside him, then again his very youth asserted itself—the world was for the young and he claimed his right, and though it seemed a glorious impossibility, Dick dared to think once or twice that Diana showed herself not averse to his company. Of course, he could not build upon that—as her father's daughter she was keen to hear sea stories—still— For an hour young hope more riotous in its fresh growth than any fairy beanstalk would soar up, only to sink down again before the smile with which Diana would greet Sir Rion's entrance, or the occasional hints under their stream of gay bantering talk of something deeper—some confidence between them.

"He—or she—loves me, loves me not?" is an absorbing enough question, but it is infinitely more so when it is complicated by a third factor, and the question becomes, "She loves him?—she loves me?" Now the scales seemed to dip the one way, now the other, and from their endless see-saw Dick found no escape.

Then late one evening there came an express from Plymouth. The letter was brought to Dick in the Oak Parlour. Diana had been singing and turned from the harpsichord at his involuntary exclamation of dismay.

"No bad news, I hope?" she said.

"I must be in Plymouth by roll-call to-morrow morning, and—and that's very bad news for me," said Dick, flushing, and with an eager glance at her. Would she regret his going?

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Sir Rion was leaning against the high chimney-piece, and now his hazel eyes, from under their heavy, drooping white lids, shot a keen glance at the pair, the look that a hawk, poised motionless in the blue, might send down on his intended prey. Dick had not been the only one who during these past few days had been watching a girl's face and seeking to read the riddle of his fate there, but Sir Rion meant to play the part of fate for himself and at his own time.

To Rion Leigh his young ward had been at first a mere adjunct to her handsome fortune, which he intended should replace the thousands which he and his forbears had lightly tossed away. But as the little hoyden had blossomed into gracious girlhood, like the hard green bud unfolding and glowing into the opening rose, the centre of his desires had shifted. It was still possession he craved (he had squandered his capacity for love long ago), but now it was Diana and her fortune he wanted, no longer the fortune first and foremost, and since needs must, Diana with it. The way had seemed to lie plain and open before him, till this young cockerel of a cousin with his sea brag had crossed it. A boy of twenty-one to wrest such a prize from Rion Leigh! He could surely afford to smile at such a thought. Still it was wiser to run no risks. Dick had been long enough at Annery—too long in Diana's company. Aloud he said rather languidly:

"We can't pit our wishes against such a command. Pity—it leaves you no alternative between a midnight ride and an early réveil—a choice of evils. We must leave the decision to you."

"I could wait till daylight," said Dick, turning over the letter rather disconsolately. To delay his start till daybreak would at least allow him to be near Diana a little longer, and who knew what chances the morning might bring? Diana might choose to rise early.

"Of course you must wait till the morning," said Diana impetuously, with a slightly reproachful glance at Sir Rion. Why was he so lukewarm to a guest? "When it's a choice between breaking your horse's legs and perhaps your neck on such roads as ours, and breaking your sleep, it shouldn't be hard to decide. But I wish they had given you another day, we were to have gone to Elbury Cove to-morrow."

"As if I could forget that!" exclaimed Dick.

"'Twill always be an inducement to come back the sooner," laughed Diana.

"My dear Di, you must remember that Dick isn't altogether your playmate. Though he's a man in authority, he's under authority too. He's a very new broom in his new post, and he'll be expected to sweep very clean," said Sir Rion. "We'll be delighted to see Master Dick when duty will allow him, but I can't have you playing the temptress and making Annery a sort of Armida's garden to him. It's not fair to any poor mortal," with a slight laugh.

Diana rose suddenly and began putting her music together. Her rare flush not only flooded her face but dyed the nape of the long, white neck, as she stooped over the harpsichord. When Dick, after making arrangements with Sir Rion as to the morning, begged humbly for a last song, she declined rather curtly.

"Indeed, Cousin Lucy," she said, turning to Miss Aylmer, "'Twill be greater kindness to leave the gentlemen now, since Dick has but a short night before him."

She bade the astonished young man good-night and good-bye in a breath and left him wondering if he had in any way offended her, and with all his dreams of a parting word swept away.

*"Souvent femme varie,
Bien fol s'y fie."*

hummed Sir Rion, and again he laughed. He had touched the right chord. Diana's pride might be counted on to respond.

Dick snatched up his candle and marched off to his room.

VI

BUT once in his room, Dick's mood changed. There was no more dreaming that night. His fair new world was shattered. The sudden call to duty had rudely aroused him to his life purpose again. What had he been doing, letting the precious days slip by? What right had he to be dreaming such dreams while his dead brother was still unavenged? Had he forgotten Ambrose?

And that was but part of his duty. While he had been watching a girl's face, hanging on her every word, his country was in imminent peril. Peril, yes—for those

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papers which he had discovered in the secret recess at Leighlands had been a dire revelation to him.

They seemed rough memoranda mostly, and chiefly in a cipher which had sorely puzzled him at first. After much anxious study and laborious piecing of them together he now believed he had got the clue to a plot, the main object of which was to seize the guardship and pour French troops into the unsuspecting town, while the French prisoners of war in the great new barracks at Princetown were to rise at a given signal, overpower their warders and march upon the rear of the town.

The conspirators' names were merely represented by figures, which still baffled him, and so apparently were most of the places referred to, but one, "Deadman's Deep," was plainly mentioned more than once, and there was even a rough jotting of directions for reaching it. "Two miles W.S.W. from the abandoned shaft on Hangery Down to the ironstone spring, and from there in a straight line S. to the Three Sisters, whence the path leads down."

The shock of this discovery was frightfully increased by the question: How came Ambrose to have this treasonable stuff so carefully concealed? That his brother could have had any share in this atrocious plot, save with the intention of finally revealing and baffling it, Dick refused to believe. Anything else was wholly impossible. But Ambrose's possession of these papers threw a lurid light on the dreadful happenings of that September night. It was for the hidden papers that the mysterious visitant, after slaying his victim, had sought so desperately and so vainly. Doubtless he had carried off the missing "directions" of which Ambrose had spoken. These, Dick felt certain, had contained information as to the plot, with instructions for him as to dealing with it, and he recalled now, with deep and vain regret, how he had refused to listen to what he had jestingly called "last words," or to any serious talk. Well, he must try to make up for it now. The murderer was a traitor too. It was a double duty to hunt him down.

Dick's first step had been to offer himself for the vacant command of the guardship. If there were treason hatching aboard her he would be on the watch. As to Deadman's Deep, he had made cautious inquiries,

but it seemed unknown by that name at least, though Hangery Down was said by people from the Cornish side to be a wide waste common, west away beyond Annery.

Dick had had much inward debate whether he should confide his discovery to Sir Rion. On hearing of the tragedy his kinsman had at once come to Leighlands and had offered all sympathy and help to his young relative. But something had held Dick back from confidence. After all his information was still very vague, and to disclose how he had obtained it, until he had fuller knowledge, might only smirch Ambrose's memory. Meantime, finding that there were still a few days before he must take up his duties on the guardship, he had suddenly acted upon Sir Rion's repeated invitation that he should come to Annery. He would be on the Cornish side of the Sound and nearer Hangery Down, if it and Deadman's Deep held any secret.

And, God forgive him, he had let the days glide away, and he had not sought out either—shame on him—and now he must return to Plymouth! The tumult of his thoughts grew intolerable. Remorse and shame had him in their fell grip. His room seemed to stifle him. He flung open the window, but it did not look out on the wide sweep of sea, only on a dense, high shrubbery. With this fever of unrest tingling through his veins, Dick had a sudden craving for the open spaces of sea and sky and for a breath of the night wind.

True the household was now abed and the doors locked, but to a lad accustomed from boyhood to a full-rigged ship it was a trifle to swing himself down from his window by the knotted ivy stems. Next moment he was out under the stars. He had walked slowly round the house to the sea front, when suddenly a broad beam of light cut through the soft darkness and fell athwart the flags of the terrace. He was not the only one waking then. Was it Diana who had withdrawn her curtain and was looking out into the night? His heart beat quicker, but next instant the curtain had been dropped, and night reigned again. He stood for a few moments dallying with his fancy, when the light shone out again to be once more quenched.

A third time the light was revealed and withdrawn, and now dreams and fancies fled. The light from that window would be seen far out at sea. These repeated flashes

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THE NEAREST FOOD TO NATURE'S FOOD

THE BLACK OPAL

looked uncomfortably like a signal. Dick had no smallest desire to pry into his host's concerns, but in these times it behoved every man to be on the alert, and, sorely against the grain as it was, he waited to see what might follow.

For a time there was no sound but the loud drumming of his own pulses, then there came the faintest click of a rolled pebble under a cautious footstep. Someone was coming up the narrow cliff path from the sea. A moment more and a dark figure vaulted lightly over the balustrade on to the terrace, and crept along to the window from which the light had been shown. The casement opened.

"Why did you come to-night when I signalled that the coast was not clear? We must take no risks," said Sir Rion's voice, a hint of anger in the carefully suppressed tone.

"*Mon Dieu!* I had to come. We must risk all or lose all," came the whispered answer in French—*French!*

Then the stranger stepped over the sill, the window was closed, the curtain dropped, and Dick was left alone in the night to wonder if it had been a dream. A dream—would to God it had been, he thought as he left the terrace and descended the steep cliff path some little distance. That the strange visitor spoke in French settled the matter. Mislike it or not—and Dick was cursing the part he had to play—he must intercept him and learn his business at Amery ere he reached the boat waiting for him on the strip of beach far below. He planted himself at an angle of the path where it turned sharply round a jut of rock, and this time the waiting seemed needless.

At last the steps approached, with less caution now. Clearly the Frenchman thought he was safe, and was wholly taken by surprise when Dick stepped out of the shadow of the rock into the starlight. Next instant he had recovered himself, and before Dick could summon him to halt, he exclaimed:

"Ah, it is you, M. Leigh. I did not look to see you to-night, and, *mon de Dieu*, I had not looked for so much of your English phlegm and caution in monsieur above," in an aggrieved tone, and nodding upward. "Things are not ripe—bah, it is time they were ripe," he went on. "If the fruit hangs too long, who knows who may pluck

it? But at last I have his assurance that we shall have our final instructions this night se'nnight, at the usual place. But this is no news to you, M. Leigh; you will doubtless be his messenger."

"'Tis not yet settled," said Dick in a low thick voice, "but," a swift thought striking him, "'twill be at Deadman's Deep as before."

"The same. *Ma foi*, 'tis well named. Our lightest *chasse-marée* could not venture near enough to land a boat save at the full of the tide. But I have not asked for the token," perfunctorily.

"'Tis all well, *he* has it," muttered Dick, imitating the other's upward jerk of the head.

There came a sound from below, the harsh, querulous cry of a sea-bird.

"They become impatient *là bas*. *Au revoir et bonne chance!*" said the Frenchman.

He hurried down the steep path, while Dick stood still like one stupefied. By a sudden inspiration he had recalled the likeness between himself and his brother, and had realised that in the faint light the Frenchman had mistaken him for Ambrose, of whose tragic severance from the plot and from life this enemy from over the sea had evidently not known. Sheer instinct had made Dick play his part apparently successfully in their brief interview. If only he could have dared to ask further questions; but to have done so might have ruined all. He was bound to assume full knowledge.

For the moment, though, he had hardly realised the import of the stranger's words. It was not they which held him rooted to the spot as if stunned. It was the appalling revelation of Sir Rion Leigh's treachery which overwhelmed him. Sir Rion, a Leigh, an Englishman, was trafficking with the enemy, was prepared to sell his country! He was the moving spirit of that conspiracy which those papers, so miraculously found at Leighlands, had revealed. Ambrose, for his own good reasons, had apparently been Sir Rion's go-between, his messenger as that Frenchman had said.

Then—then—who was it who had come secretly by the priest's door into the library? Whose safety and honour would stand in desperate jeopardy if Ambrose had threatened to reveal the plot, as he might have done? To whom would it have meant

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life or death to silence such a witness, and to secure such damning evidence as those papers hidden in the secret crypt? Little wonder they had been sought for so frantically.

And almost as frantically Dick strove against what some deeper force than reason bade him acknowledge as the hideous truth. In vain. The doubts he had once refused to entertain flared into dreadful certainty. In letters of flame across the cloud of night his kinsman's name was branded—traitor and murderer!

Well, thank God, he could leave ere day-break. He need not break bread under Rion Leigh's roof again. Aye, he could shake the dust of Annery off his feet till he returned to exact retribution. Yes, but he must leave there someone dearer than life—he must leave Diana! What did she know of the cruelty and foul dishonour lurking behind that gay and gallant mask? And but an hour ago he had seen her smile upon Rion Leigh, and had speculated miserably whether her choice might fall upon him. Men said they were to marry. Dick stifled a hoarse cry—"Not that—not that!"—and flung out his arms in the darkness as if to thrust off some strangling horror.

VII

A SLENDER slip of a moon stood white above the rose-hued haze in the west when, one evening a week later, the tide neared the full in Deadman's Deep, an unfrequented cove locally so called by the few fishermen who shunned it because of the treacherous shelving reefs of rock with which the bay was paved. With even a moderate sailing wind the little bay was a mass of white-driven foam through which no boat could reach the shore, so the Deep was unvisited save by the sea-birds.

To-night, however, as the waveless tide rose up and up, it would be just possible for a skilfully handled boat to put in, and from the nook amid the tumbled rocks where he had ensconced himself Dick Leigh watched, now the empty rose-dyed sea, now the low, broken cliff, for any sign of life. Had the Frenchman misled him that unforgettable night at Annery? Had he embarked on a wild-goose chase?

With all his might he had striven to make up for those lost days at Annery; and yet how could he call them lost when they

had overswept with a golden light the dark cloud of wrath and horror which overhung his life? His request for a brief leave so soon after taking over the guardship had not been very favourably received. However, it had been granted, and he had explored every corner of Hangery Down in search of the old shaft—one among several it proved—from which he could shape his course to the "ironstone spring," and thence to the "Three Sisters." What kind of landmark that might be puzzled him for a time. In this wind-swept land they could hardly be trees, but he believed he had found them at last in a group of conical rocks from which he had made his way down to the shore. Now, was he in the right place? he questioned anxiously. His sailor's eye assured him of the extreme difficulty of the landing, but there were many dangerous coves on that rock-bound coast.

Ah! Standing well out, there came round one horn of the bay, drifting with the tide, a small vessel under the brown, peaked sail of a fishing lugger, but her long narrow hull, shaped for speed, was not that of any fishing craft. On she came dipping to the gentle swell, and presently a boat was let down and was being pulled briskly to shore.

Good luck! There was but one man on board of her.

Now Dick breathlessly watched the low cliff. Something seemed to be stirring among the thick scrubby bushes which clothed it, and soon into the after-glow still lingering on sea and shore came a slight figure moving with swift ease and lightness among the rocks and boulders. Through the evening hush came the weird, harsh cry of a sea-bird. It was echoed from the sea, and the boat was rapidly pulled in.

What was it made Dick's heart jump and his breath quicken, as, crouching under the cover of the rocks, he crept cautiously towards the spot where the boat must touch land? There was something undefinably familiar in the gait and air of the approaching figure, an ease, a grace, a distinction, which consorted strangely with the wild, lonely shore and the lawless errand.

The messenger wore a man's slouch riding hat with the flaps turned down, and a long *redingote* reaching well down over the high boots. For a boy or a woman the figure was tall, but for a man—*was it a man?*

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The nose of the boat ground against the rock. Its occupant leaped out, secured it, and turned to the messenger, who, having hastily pulled off a gauntleted glove, held out a hand, and then with the other drew from the breast of the *redingote* a small packet, and in a low voice gave some directions in French!

Dick clutched hard at the rock behind which he was bowed, and clenched his teeth, lest his agony should escape him in a groan. If that night on the cliff path at Annery, when he had been forced to face his kinsman's treachery and crime, the solid earth had seemed convulsed beneath his feet, now he was hurled into the black profound, into a bottomless abyss of sheer horror. For it was Diana's voice which was speaking; the voice he would have known among ten thousand, the voice which to him had been sweeter than music, inspiring as a clarion call. Diana, to whom he had vowed his heart and his life; Diana, whom he had believed to be steel-true in her loyalty and devotion, was now the traitor's emissary, giving to her country's enemy the instructions which were to bring the hostile hordes on her native land.

The Frenchman thrust the packet into his breast. A last word and Diana turned and made her way up the stony beach again with the same buoyant, elastic lightness. Great God—why did the burden of her shame and guilt not crush her to the earth? The man stooped to loosen the boat, and in that instant Dick came to life again and answered to the call of duty. For him the heavens might have fallen, but his country must come first. These papers must not leave the English shore.

Every muscle was taut, every nerve strung. With a bound like the leap of a tiger, he sprang upon the unsuspecting man. In a moment, before the Frenchman could rally for a blow, all was over without sound or outcry, and Dick had possessed himself of the precious papers. The man lay unconscious from the fierce, sudden blow, but at least he was in no danger of drowning; he might be left where he lay, the tide would rise no higher.

Next instant Dick dashed up the beach. Diana had already disappeared among the bushes. When he reached the cliff top there was no sign of her. Doubtless she knew the way much better than he, he

thought bitterly, but he heard the distant clink and rattle of shod hoofs.

He found his own horse and set off in wild pursuit, and if ever a man risked his neck a hundred times, it was Dick Leigh in that mad Lenore-like ride. The few miles, but such miles, heath and boulder, swamp and thicket, between Hangery Down and Annery were soon traversed, and he found himself at the gates, his horse trembling from head to foot and in a lather of sweat. He had vowed that he would not cross Rion Leigh's threshold, but that was swallowed up in the one imperious need which possessed him—he must somehow see Diana and confront her.

He leaped down, pulled off his outer coat and threw it over his horse, and leading it into the thick, wind-clipt wood which ringed in the old house, secured it to a tree. Darkness had come now, but he knew his way well enough round the house to the long window of the Oak Parlour. He did not pause to consider that Miss Aylmer might be there, or even Sir Rion. He strode up to the casement, and the luck which sometimes favours the reckless still held. The panelled room was alive and alight with the leaping play of flame and shadow from a fire of beechen boughs on the wide hearth, and in a tall chair beside it, Diana was sitting alone, the red fire-light on her face.

VIII

DICK opened the casement and stepped in. Diana looked round. His sudden entrance did not seem to startle her, rather it appeared to chime in with some happy strain of thought.

"Dick!" she exclaimed as if involuntarily—at another moment how his name upon her lips would have thrilled the young man—then she sat looking at him with something of the innocent triumph and gladness of a child who has a secret which it would fain impart to another.

That radiant look, without a trace of doubt or shrinking, utterly confounded Dick. He stared at her for a moment in silence. How could she look like that after what she had done? Then the torrent, dammed back for that moment, burst forth.

"You can look at me—you can speak to me—you can smile—*smile!* Oh, aye, when did a traitor ever lack a smile, or even a kiss if need be?"

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"Traitor!" Diana had sprung to her feet. The muffling *redingote* had been flung aside. She stood straight and slim and tall, a young Bellona, breathing battle, the ruddy firelight shining through her hair and making a mist of gold about her head. The fiery spark glittered ominously in her eyes.

"Traitor!" she uttered.

"Aye—traitor!" Dick hurled the word at her as if it were some wounding missile.

"Are you mad, Dick Leigh? 'Tis the only excuse."

"Mad! If only I were!" groaned the young man, clenching his hands. "Mad? No, but I've been mad. Mad enough to have staked my life, my soul upon your loyalty—your honour. To me you were the one woman in the world. But now—" He threw out desperate hands.

"But now!" And what have I done now to forfeit the honour of Mr. Leigh's high regard, for which sure I should be monstrous grateful?" Her tone cut, but Dick was beyond heeding.

"You'll deny it most like, since you can sit and smile over it."

"Deny what? Why are you rating me like this?"

"Where were you an hour ago?" coming a step nearer, his blue eyes fixed piercing keen upon her face. "No, no," with a sudden change of tone to almost frantic entreaty—"don't deny it, I couldn't bear that, for I know—I saw—"

"Spy!" broke in Diana. "Take *that* in return for your 'traitor,'" and the word came with the force of a blow. "There's a pair of us it would seem—a pretty pair," she laughed harshly. "And pray, what did you see?" scornfully.

"What I couldn't have believed possible unless I had seen it. What I'd have killed any other man for saying—" He paused.

"What—what—what?" cried Diana. "Let's have it out."

"I saw you—you, Diana Cary," speaking with slow forced calm, "give to a Frenchman at Deadman's Deep some papers, which I know are the signal to let loose the enemy on the country. You can't deny it."

"Deny it! Why should I? I glory in it." She faced him, erect, superb; in the wave of exultation which uplifted her, her very stature seemed heightened.

Dick stared at her aghast, as if, instead of

her triumphant young beauty, he was fronted with the petrifying mask of the Gorgon.

"You admit it—you—an Englishwoman—your father's daughter! Thank God, he's dead," he muttered thickly.

"My father! I pray he knows!" exclaimed Diana, a new, sudden radiance on her face.

"Are *you* mad, Diana Cary? 'Tis the only excuse! I return you your words," said Dick in a changed voice. "At least I've been able to save you and the country for the time from the consequences of your madness. I left your Frenchman dead or stunned on the shore, and I have the papers"—putting his hand to his breast.

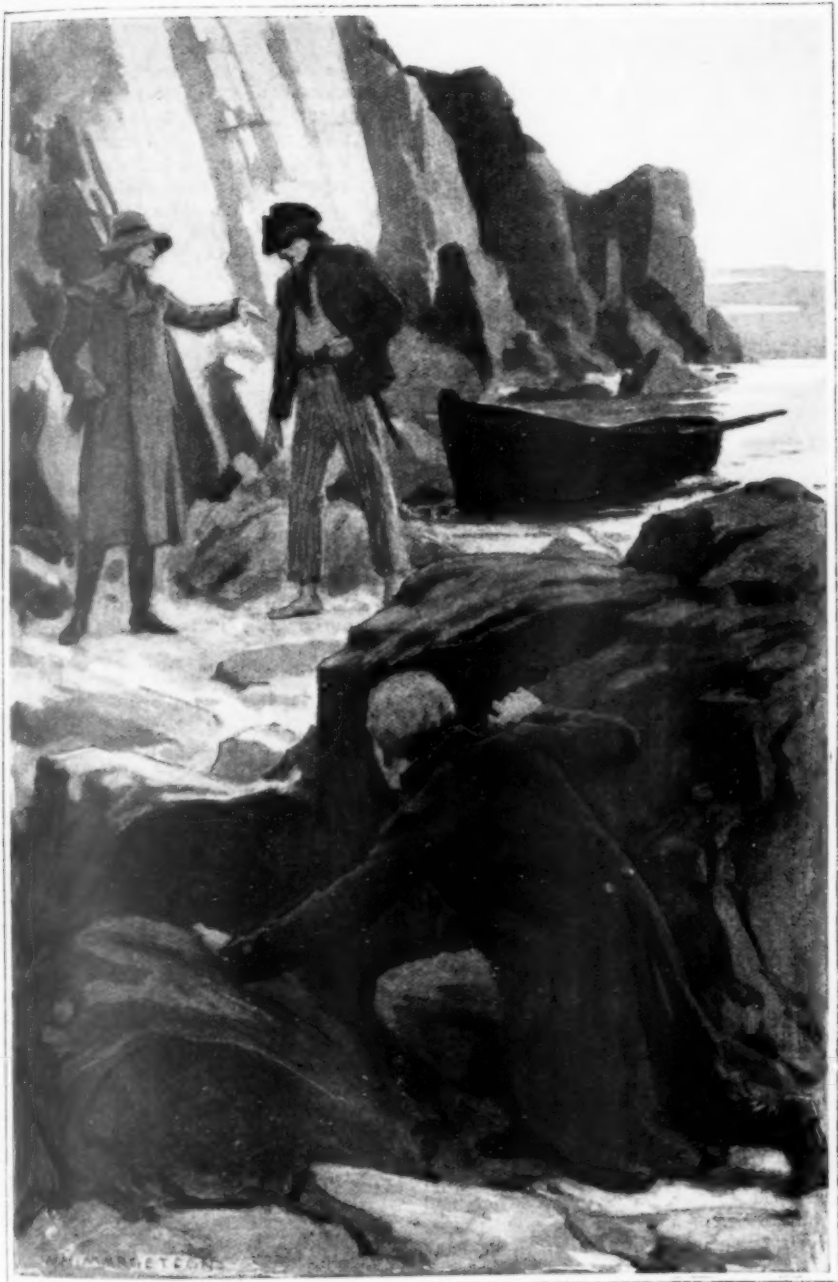
"You fool! You blind fool!" cried Diana, springing forward. "You don't know what you've done. You've ruined the work of years—your dead brother's work. Give me them back," wildly. "There may be time yet."

"Stop!" exclaimed Dick. "My dead brother! What do you mean? I warn you that not even from you will I take it that he had any share in this vile plot, except to reveal it at his own time."

"Vile plot!" broke in Diana hotly. "But, of course, you don't know—you *can't* know. But you must know now," her face and voice changing. "Why did you anger me so? Here have we been rating each other when we should have been consulting how to mend matters. Do you know what is in those papers?"

"No, I've had no time to look at them yet," said Dick, "but from what I found in the library at home I know there's a plot afoot to deliver up the guard-ship and the town to the French, and the final summons was to be given to-night."

"Aye, it would *seem* so," said Diana eagerly, "but it's the French who will deliver themselves into *our* hands. The real plot is to lure them here on pretence of an easy prey, an easy victory, and then seize and hold them captive, and the Corsican will have so many ships and men the less. We can't all go out to fight, but at least 'tis one way of serving our country, though I own I hate deceiving even the enemy. You think I am trying to deceive *you*?" anger flaming up again. "You might and welcome, for me, but for Ambrose's sake, you must believe me, and you must help to carry on his work."



"Dick clutched hard at the rock
behind which he was bowed"—p. 203.

Drawn by
W. H. Margeson.

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He was heart and soul in it, and when he could no longer carry it on he prayed me to take it up, and sent me his token. See!"

She had been standing erect, her hands lightly clasped behind her. Now she flung out her left hand. On it was the black opal—the ring which had been torn from Ambrose's dead finger!

As Diana threw out her hand the great sullen gem caught the firelight, and the red wavering flame kindled in its black depths. To Dick's eyes it seemed the very fire of hell. Had a hooded cobra, with its fangs extended, darted at him out of the girl's fair bosom, he could not have sprung back more wildly aghast. To Diana there was but one explanation of his emotion.

"You, who seek for justice on his slayers—and God knows I am with you there—" she said in a low, tense voice, "will surely be with us in helping on his work. He used the ring as a token of good faith to the French emissaries, and I was to do the same, as they knew it well." Then she drew in a quick, startled breath. "I was pledged to show it to none but them, but then you are his brother—we need you—sure it can do no harm, though I promised Sir Rion when he brought it to me——"

"Don't soil your lips with his name!" exclaimed Dick, springing forward with such fury that the girl gave back as if from a blow. "Take it off," he cried, pointing to the ring. "It reeks with blood—my brother's blood! You talk of deceiving others—my God, do you know how you have been deceived? That double-dyed traitor and murderer, Rion Leigh, has been making you his cat's paw, as he made poor Ambrose——"

"Sir Rion—traitor—murderer! You have flung hard words enough at me—you knew no better—but I will not hear them of Sir Rion. I *know* him," said Diana proudly.

"Know him!" echoed Dick. "And what can you know of him?"

"What all the world knows—that he is a brave and honourable gentleman—a true man, a true patriot whom I have been glad and proud to serve. But he has no need of me to defend him." There was defiance in her eyes, a haughty smile on the fresh lips.

Dick gazed at her for a moment in silence, and like a sword in his vitals came the question: Was it Rion Leigh whom she

loved? She well might; he had everything outwardly to commend him. And now he must shatter her idol; break the heart, it might be, of the girl he loved. Well, it must be, there was no remedy. He could not leave her in her delusion. Not even for her sake could he spare Rion Leigh.

"You only know the outside," he said in a low, hoarse voice. "Where did you get *that*?" pointing to the black opal still glowing darkly upon her hand.

"I have told you. Sir Rion brought it to me," coldly.

"Aye, and where did *he* get it?"

"Your brother sent it. I have told you that also."

"Sent it!" cried Dick with something between a fierce bitter laugh and a groan. "Rion Leigh took it from my brother's dead hand. It was not enough to murder him—he rifled the very corpse."

"I will not hear any more," cried Diana with equal passion. "It is not possible. For your brother's sake I have let you speak, for I know how grief warps the mind, but this is too much. I will not hear it."

"But you must hear it," and Dick planted himself squarely before her. "Rion Leigh fooled Ambrose as he has fooled you with this cock-and-bull version of his infamous plot, and it takes a load off my mind to be finally assured of this, though I never could or would have dreamed that my brother had any guilty share in it. Ambrose was wearing that ring when I parted from him the night before he was killed. When did Rion Leigh get it from him to bring it to you? Tell me that! Tucker can swear that not a soul came to Leighlands that night, nor all the next day——"

"But it was robbery," protested Diana, though in a fainter voice. "Everyone says so—the diamonds——"

"Aye, a robber who knew how to enter and leave by the priest's door," said Dick dryly. "A robber whose very life hung upon a word from Ambrose, or on the witness of the papers I found in the little secret crypt behind the chimney-piece. It was to find them, and not money or jewels, that the *robber* ransacked the place. I believe, on my soul, that Ambrose had discovered the real nature of the plot and how he had been fooled, and that when Rion Leigh paid his last secret visit that fatal

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night, Ambrose taxed him with it and refused to keep silence, and—well, dead men tell no tales."

He flung away and paced rapidly up and down the room. There was a pause. Diana, white and dumb, had sat down in her tall chair again and turned away her face.

"It brings him a step nearer to Leighlands, too," said Dick bitterly; "but his guilt is heavy enough without that."

"No more," said Diana faintly; and again there was silence which Dick made no further effort to break. He knew what the revelation of the real Rion Leigh had been to himself—what might it not be to the girl sitting still and silent before him?

Suddenly in the great quiet house there broke out a clamour of excited voices. Like a gust of wind it swept through the house, and then was as suddenly hushed. Dick had sprung to the door; Diana, roused from her stupor, was beside him, alive and alert again.

"They were speaking French," she breathed, alarm in her eyes. Then her quick mind leaped at the truth: "The man you left on the shore—they must have come ashore to seek him—they'd find him dead or stunned and the papers gone—they've come here to seek them," she uttered in a tense whisper. "Could Sir—could *he* guess it was you? Is there anything to connect you with it?"

"I left my horse tied in the copse. I threw my coat over the poor beast," said Dick in the same hard whisper. "If they've found him—"

There was no more needed. Each grasped the instant peril.

"You must go—at once," said Diana, darting to the window. Her hand fell from the casement hasp. She turned a dead-white face upon him. "There are two men already posted on the terrace," she gasped.

Dick thrust his hand under his coat, first for the papers, then for his pistol. They should not get them from him alive. Diana sprang towards him.

"They can't know you're here—in this room, I mean. Quick! It's the only way for the moment—someone is coming. I hear steps in the passage—quick!"

She opened the door of a tall oaken *armoire* which stood in a corner of the room. A hooded garden-cloak or two hung in it.

She fairly thrust Dick in, as a knock came to the door, and Sir Rion's voice, easy and debonair as usual, said:

"May I come in, Di?"

IX

WITHOUT pausing for an answer Sir Rion entered. He strolled up to the hearth and leaned his shoulder against the high chimney-piece. In his riding-dress he looked indeed a man amongst men. Diana cast one glance at the tall, splendid figure, and then with an inward shudder turned her face away.

What were those words of the lesson which Parson had read in church last Sunday? "Whited sepulchres which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness." Uncleanness! The ghastly truth had been spread naked before her eyes. She could shut them no longer against Dick's accusations, Dick's proofs. She had been compelled to see what lay behind that fair and noble outward seeming, and her soul sickened.

And she had deemed this Rion Leigh to be a true patriot, and of a high, chivalrous, knightly spirit! She had been proud, poor fool, to be admitted to his confidence, proud and glad to aid him in his noble plans, to serve him even in the humblest way. She had honoured and admired him with all the headlong generosity of a pure, ardent young heart, but, thank God, she had never *loved* him. She might have—might have mistaken her romantic enthusiasm for love—she shuddered at the thought, but Dick's instant and imminent peril, the instinctive uprising of her whole being to defend him, to fight for him, had revealed her own heart to her. And of that peril she could have no doubt; the black opal, which seemed to sear her finger like a coal of fire, burned it in upon her brain. That man, standing stately and gracious before her, had slain the one brother to save his own skin—in the utter revulsion of feeling she put it in the baldest, bitterest words: What mercy would he have on the other who had frustrated his plot and now held the proofs of his infamy?

But if she were to save Dick she must look and act as if nothing had happened, so when Sir Rion asked:

"And how has my brave envoy sped? Is

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all well?" she looked up, even forced a confident, satisfied smile, as she answered:

"All is well. All was as you said. The boat and the man were waiting. I did your bidding—gave him the packet and your message. It was all over in a moment."

"All except what may come from it. We may expect to hear of great things soon," said Sir Rion. "You will have good cause to be proud of your share in bringing them about, as I am proud, too, and grateful to you for to-night's work."

How those words would once have thrilled the girl's whole being! Now she heard them with a stab of dread. Did he mean them?

"It was a very simple service—you make too much of it," was all she could force herself to say, but her warring emotions gave a depth to her tone which she hoped might make up for her scant words.

"No, there is no helper more valuable than one who does exactly what he is told. I wonder now why I didn't ask your aid sooner. Poor Ambrose, that unhappy delusion of his made him doubtful and uncertain towards the end."

Diana grasped the arms of her chair tight. How dare he take Ambrose Leigh's name upon his lips?

"Did you see the Frenchman regain his ship?" asked Sir Rion suddenly, after a brief pause.

"No, I looked round but once, he was loosening his boat, and when I was free of the bushes at the cliff-top it was too dark to see. But you've surely no reason to fear that he did not reach the *chasse-marée* safely?" sitting erect as if with sudden anxiety, and indeed she had cause enough for bitter anxiety. "I did hear some loud talk a moment ago, but I did not dream—"

"No, no," said Sir Rion reassuringly, "merely a quarrel about the lobster pots down in the bay which they came to me to settle; as if I knew or cared anything about it."

Then he returned to Diana's exploit and questioned her as to its minutest details, till Miss Aylmer simpered in in her evening gown and broke into voluble surprise at finding Diana still in her riding-gear. Perforce she had to go, but never was toilet so quickly performed, and presently she was back again in her straight scanty white Empire gown—for the fashions, if naught

else, still came from France—her ruddy hair piled high, her throat pearl-clasped.

"Why, here is a transformation!" exclaimed Sir Rion as she entered, and Diana could have echoed his words. He had changed his dress apparently as quickly as she, and in her brief absence, supper, as was occasionally done, had been laid on a round table near the hearth.

"I had a fancy to sup here to-night—to me 'tis always the pleasantest room in the house," said Sir Rion.

As they sat down Diana cast one swift glance over her shoulder at the corner where the tall *armoire* stood. How was Dick faring within, cramped in the narrow space, unable to move, hardly able to breathe, and she still powerless to release him? The softly lighted room, the bright table, Sir Rion's talk—which would have been a feast to any other listener, for when he chose he was brilliant—was becoming a nightmare to her. That he suspected something she was now certain, and her dread was confirmed, as, supper over and the table cleared, he did not retire to his wine, but sat on and prayed for a song.

And Diana, her heart like lead, sat at her harpsichord as Dick had seen her that first evening, the light of the candles enhaloing her face and hair, and sang song after song. She dare not plead fatigue, she could only hope that Sir Rion might tire of his cat-and-mouse game, cease torturing her and seek for Dick elsewhere. At last Miss Aylmer, who had been yawning behind her fan for the last hour, "vowed and protested" that she could sit up no longer, and dear Di must come with her. And Diana had to go. Custom and convention can be grim tyrants at times, and there was no plea which even her nimble wits could devise to excuse her lingering.

"I shall put out the candles," said Sir Rion laughingly, as he opened the door and bowed the ladies out.

Diana would never outlive the remembrance of that hour spent in her room and its searing anguish. She dared not sooner make any attempt to release the prisoner, and yet what might not have happened in the Oak Parlour from which she had been so ceremoniously shut out? She could only hope that Sir Rion, while believing Dick to be concealed somewhere about Annerby, could not suspect that he was actually hidden in her own sitting-room, and that

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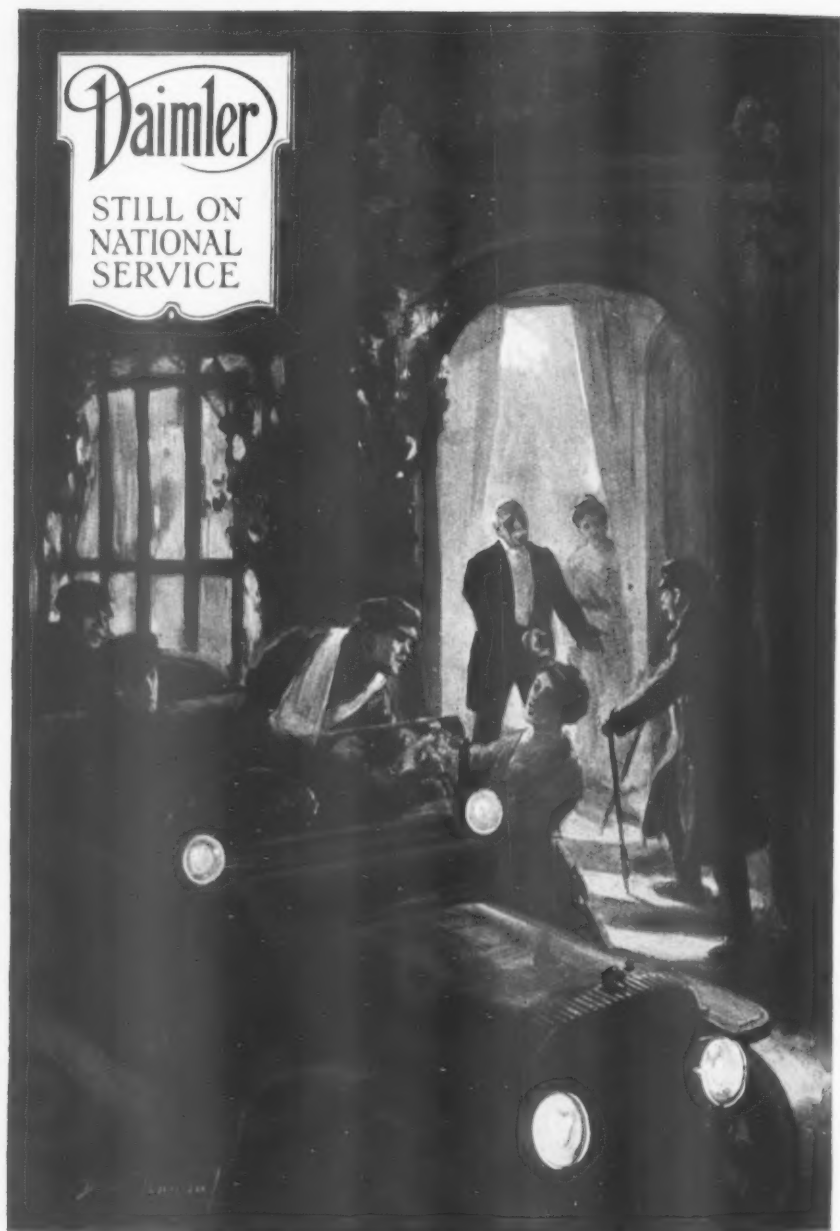
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THE BLACK OPAL

she was privy to it. It was a slender thread to cling to, but it was all she had.

Midnight had long tolled from the big turret clock, when at last she stole down her staircase. All was dark and still. Hope began to stir again. Screening her candle with her hand she softly opened the door of the Oak Parlour, and then stood still upon the threshold. The room was lit as if for a festivity! Fresh candles gleamed from the sconces, the fire glowed on the wide hearth. Before it stood Sir Rion. He looked round with a smile upon his lips as the door opened, but her gaze swept past him to the corner of the room.

It gaped empty. The *armoire* was gone. The very worst had happened.

Diana made no sound. When utmost calamity comes it is rarely met with outcry. Sir Rion came up, took the guttering candle from her passive hand, and closed the door.

"My hopes are being remarkably fulfilled," he said. "I thought I should likely have the pleasure of seeing you again to-night; indeed, as you see, I have prepared for it," with a wave of his hand towards the leaping fire. "I may have a good deal to say, you had better sit down," handing her a chair.

With a movement of her hand Diana dumbly rejected it.

"What have you done? Where is he?" she said in a hoarse, strained voice.

"Ah, my dear Di, you can't expect me to tell you that. I quite admit that you two young people have taken me by surprise—rather a humiliating confession," with a shrug. "I did not expect you young Nelson-to-be to blunder head-foremost into the midst of our plans as he has done, nor did I expect my loyal helper would turn against me and aid him. But while a man may be outwitted once, it is only a fool who permits it a second time, and I can promise you I certainly shall not. I have seen to that."

"I was your helper, your proud and willing helper, so long as I believed you to be loyal," said Diana firmly; "but I know now the real object of your plans—"

"You mean that you have accepted Dick Leigh's hothead view of them."

"Why keep up the farce?" exclaimed Diana. "You must see that it is played out; the marvel is that it lasted so long. No doubt you have smiled often enough at

my gullibility. I wonder at it myself—but then I trusted you," bitterly.

"So be it; we'll drop the pretence then," said Sir Rion. "It was certainly very convenient for me that you and that poor, puling creature, Ambrose Leigh, were so easily gulled; since you use the word yourself, I may—"

"He was not gulled at the last," broke in Diana. "And I am not to be gulled any longer. With the knowledge I have I hold your life in my hands. I am not to be silenced as you silenced poor Ambrose. It is Dick Leigh's life and safety in exchange for yours. Assure me of that if you wish to keep your place among men."

"There are various ways of silencing inconvenient tongues. You seem to find it hard to believe my assurance that I am not quite a fool," said Sir Rion suavely. "Do you expect that I shall allow either you or Master Dick to walk out of Annery and blab your story at your leisure? If there's any question of making terms the game is wholly in my hands. And first, I am going to assure myself of your silence very effectually. Since you were committed to my care, I have always intended to marry you when the suitable time came. I shall now make arrangements for our immediate marriage, and after that what you may choose to say won't matter. In no court of justice is a wife's testimony taken against her husband. But I don't think you'll want to say much."

"Marry you—never!" ejaculated Diana, the whole force of her wrath, and horror, and utter recoil summed up in the one word.

"Oh, yes, you will," calmly. "My dear child, try to realise the position. It is Dick Leigh's life and safety in exchange for your promise—for yourself rather. Assure me of that if you wish him to keep his place among men. And now, I think, the tables are pretty completely turned." And with his cold, triumphant smile still on his face, he leaned back against the chimney-piece and gazed at her.

Diana stood for a moment as if stunned. "I think you are the devil," she said slowly at last.

Sir Rion laughed easily. "You flatter me," with a bow. "No, I'm showing no diabolical or superhuman cleverness; I'm only using for my own protection the weapons which you and Master Dick have

THE QUIVER

obligingly put into my hands. You foolish child; would I have left the black opal with you if I had not felt as secure of you as I do of it?"

"The black opal will be your ruin yet!" cried Diana wildly. "You may silence me as you silenced Ambrose Leigh, for I will never marry you—no, not even for Dick's sake," her lips blanching at his name. "Do you think he would thank me for his life on such terms? His brother's blood would cry out of the ground against it. He would choose death rather."

"Death is a grim customer when you come face to face with him. But it's growing late, or early rather, and I must not keep you longer from your rest. You have excellent wits of your own, my dear Di; all the more credit to me for having gulled you, if only for a time. A little reflection will soon show you that it's a case of 'needs must.' You may add, if you like, 'when the devil drives.' I've no objection. I am glad you have always liked your rooms. I think you had better keep to them so that you may have a quiet time for your decision."

"You would make me a prisoner!" scornfully.

"At least you will find it difficult to leave Annery till it suits me. And now," he added, with his usual courtly bow, "Good night!"

He was gone. For a moment Diana stood erect and proud as she had faced her tormentor; then her eyes turned to the empty corner, and a wave of desolation and despair overwhelmed her.

"Dick, Dick, where are you?" she cried, and she sank down on the hearth, while the firelight played on her bright, prostrate head.

X

DARKNESS was yielding to dawn, though day had not yet come, but the lightening of the cloud of night was the more tardy for the dense mist which overspread the waste, and through which faintly seen objects—a humped bush or a stray boulder—loomed vast and vague.

Swishing through the sere heather, splashing through the marshy hollows, a small company of men were cautiously picking their way. They were stout, active fellows, wearing a plain dark uniform, and mounted on hardy moorland ponies. They were

moving slowly and doubtfully, like hounds thrown off the scent.

"Unless this fog lifts, we've not much chance. We may as well go back to Princetown," said one in a low grumbling voice.

"Aye, the Froggies got too good a start, they may be anywhere by this time," said another. "Stop! Was that horse's feet?" pulling up his beast suddenly.

All halted and listened eagerly, but the mist muffled sounds as well as sights. If a faint click of hoofs came through the silence, it was so far off as to seem mere fancy.

"I heard nothing but our own beasts, and they're making noise enough to rouse the whole of Dartmoor," said one wrathfully, as his pony stumbled clatteringly among the loose stones. "Besides, runaway prisoners don't set off on horseback, Giles."

"No, but if there are shod beasts about, it means we must be near one of the moor tracks, Dawson, and we could get our bearings again," said Giles, who had fancied he heard the sound. "And what's that in front of us? Looks big enough for a house, at least."

The men, warders from the great war prison on Dartmoor, in search of two fugitives who had escaped early in the night, turned towards the dark mass showing dim against the now whitening east.

"'Tis nobbut a stack."

"Nay, 'tis a waggon," said another, and he proved to be right.

A heavy farm-cart stood unhorsed on a rough, boggy track. It was loaded with pieces of furniture well packed round with straw.

"Somebody's plenishing on its way home. What's come of the men and beasts?"

"Gone to get more help most like," said Giles, glancing at the clumsy wheels sinking in the peaty ground.

"Well, it's our duty to see it's only plenishing," said Dawson. "There may be French brandy, or worse, French firearms among all that straw. There's too many of them getting smuggled over somehow."

The suggestion was eagerly caught at. Such a find would make up for their barren hours of search. In a few minutes the heather was strewn with the contents of the waggon.

"This here cupboard's locked," announced Dawson, who had mounted into the cart. "We'm bound to see what's inside."

THE BLACK OPAL

The cupboard was a carved *armoire* in dark old oak.

Dawson drew his cutlass and applied the short, strong blade to the lock. The stout old oak and the heavy lock resisted for a time, till, with a splintering crack, they gave way, and he prised the door open. Then, with a spluttering oath, he dropped from the waggon to the ground, his rugged face white.

"My God, it's murder. There's a body inside!" he gasped.

A moment's horrified pause and his comrades clambered up. The *armoire* had been laid on its back in the cart, and in the straight, narrow interior, as in a coffin, lay, sure enough, the body of a young man, the fair boyish face white and ghastly, piteous in its very youthfulness, upturned as if in vain appeal to the wan, struggling overclouded dawn. The men, hardened as they were to harsh and dreadful sights and happenings, stared in dead silence for a moment. The dreary barren waste, over-spread by the dense brooding pall of mist, the dead heavy silence, the waggon, that strange death bier abandoned amid the wide desolation, all had their effect, and added to the shock of the discovery. One or two swore under their breath.

"Here's been dirty work sure enough," muttered another, as he stooped over and tried to raise the body. He uttered a startled exclamation: "He bain't dead; leastways, he's still warm."

In a trice the seeming corpse was lifted out on to the heather with a coat or two spread beneath him. There was no sign of any wound. While some tried to revive him, Dawson, muttering "We'm bound to find who he is," searched for some proof of identity. There was a heavy gold repeater and some money, so it seemed as if robbery were not accountable for their mysterious find. A pocket-book yielded a few papers. Dawson, who admitted himself like the rest of his comrades to be "no scholar," pored over them for a time, and then announced that their charge must be "a naval chap," but more than that he couldn't say. Then, finding something in the breast of the coat crackling under his hand, he felt carefully over it, and from between the lining and the cloth drew out a few closely written slips of paper. After a puzzled stare he at last acknowledged that he could not make head or tail of them.

"They be in some furrin lingo, sure."

"Don't say 'tis French," came the answering growl.

"Couldn't say. These be a mort o' figgers and crosses."

Meantime their charge opened wide blue eyes and made a faint effort to sit up. The men gazed at each other perplexed.

"'Tis a desperate queer business, but there's been foul play somewhere," was a conclusion not difficult to reach.

The mist rolled wave-like back for a moment, showing a valley with a church tower and a great gabled house amid the woods.

"Yond's Morestead," exclaimed Giles. "Better two of us take him down to Squire Lavington's. 'Tis good luck we'm so near. The poor chap needs a doctor, that's plain, whoever he is, and his friends and the police'll have to know. There's a good deal to be cleared up."

XI

"A GOOD deal to be cleared up." And so it proved; but the clearing up seemed like to be a long and bitter business. Sir Rion had seen to that. For his own safety he was bound to do so, but it was the culmination of a long grudge. As young Rion Leigh, the heir presumptive to Leighlands, he had counted so confidently on the succession, that from their very birth he had regarded the Leigh twins as the usurpers of his rights, the chief obstacle in the way of his desires. As the years went on, and with all his gifts he had failed to win the wealth and power for which he thirsted, that grudge took definite shape and form.

Dick's choice of a career had early removed him from the scene; but on a fighting frigate peril was never far distant; anything might happen.

Ambrose had at first been easily enough dealt with. Dazzled by such "a splendid cousin," he had allowed himself to be hoodwinked and made a tool of, while all the time his kinsman had sedulously fed the morbid delusion which was slowly sapping his mental and physical powers. But when that willing tool turned its edge against his own hand; when Ambrose, suddenly discovering how he had been deceived, amazingly asserted himself, and dared to give him, Rion Leigh, the choice between exposure and instant withdrawal from the

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plot, in a fierce gust of rage and panic he had swept the weakling from his path.

And then had come Dick. No weakling he, but a formidable foe who had countered him in every move, and had even ventured to rival him for Diana's favour. But at last, sheer luck, aided by Dick's own rashness, had thrown the game into Rion Leigh's hands.

All had happened that night at Annery as Diana's quick instinct had divined. When after the long hours of skilful torment—part of the price he meant yet fully to exact from Diana and her boy lover—the *armoire* had been opened and Sir Rion had seen his youthful rival lying helpless before him, the temptation to deal with him as he had done with Ambrose had been strong indeed. But he had no wish to have any act of violence traced to Annery, and he might still have his uses for Dick. He had carefully selected from the packet taken from the French spy at Deadman's Deep one or two papers, enough to arouse suspicion, but giving no exact information. With a cynical smile he had inserted them in the lining of Dick's coat where they had been found. If by any ill-luck Dick ever had the chance to state his case, well, his guns would be pretty well spiked.

Then the waggon had been loaded and dispatched in the care of two men whom he could trust. They were to convey the *armoire* to a lonely house far out on the moor which was used by Sir Rion as a base for communicating with Princetown. The cleverest, most daring schemer cannot, however, calculate all risks. But for the chance of the Princetown warders scouring the moor that night for fugitives, the plan would not have miscarried. But the men, as well as Sir Rion, had their safety to consider. Moor men both, their acute hearing had detected the far-off sound of the ponies' feet. Ordinary travellers did not ride the moor at such an hour and in such numbers. Whoever was coming might stop them, question them, search the waggon like enough; and what then? No answer was needed! In a twinkling the horses were unyoked, their charge deserted, and the men were off, their knowledge of the moor serving them well. In the mist the waggon might be unnoticed; they would return if the coast was clear. But though Sir Rion was a good paymaster, they were not going to put their necks in a noose for him.

The Lavingtons were old friends of the Leighs, and when Dick was brought to Morestead in so strange and pitiable a plight, they could not at first do enough for him. But he was soon conscious of a change, and from being the means of triumphantly unmasking a dangerous plot—as he had confidently expected to be—Dick found himself looked on as a culprit with the evidence heavily against him.

What had happened that night at Annery he could never clearly recall. The long hours that he had passed in the Oak Parlour, rigid, motionless, helpless in his upright coffin, had been sheer unmitigated torture of mind and body. Shut up there, as if he were already dead, save for the power of hearing, which was but an avenue of torment, he had listened to Sir Rion's suave, courtly talk, to Diana's gay and gracious replies, and then, as the night wore on, to the tinkle of the harpsichord and the outgush of her fresh, sweet voice in song after song. He had tried to assure himself that it was for his sake she was enduring what must be torment to her too. Though so few words had passed between them, her sudden change of manner, her eager solicitude had been balm to Dick. Was it rash to hope that it meant more than mere humanity? Yet that she should be giving her smiles, her fair company to Rion Leigh! He writhed at the thought.

Like the dread water torture, every word she uttered was ere long like another drop, drop on the live tissue of heart and brain, till over and over again his agony reached a climax when endurance seemed no longer possible.

He must end it—fling the door wide and rush out to meet his fate, be it what it might. And over and over again he would have yielded to the temptation had it not been for the packet in his breast. He might fling away his life if he chose, but for his country's sake it was his plain duty to guard these papers to the last.

Endurance has its limits. As the hours passed, the long excitement and strain of the day, the confined air, sheer dead weariness at last began to tell on him. In spite of his peril, of the need for quick brain and ready hand, a heavy stupor overcame him, battle against it as he might. He was hardly conscious when the moment came. The door was open, light was blinding his eyes, hands were at his throat, his breast.

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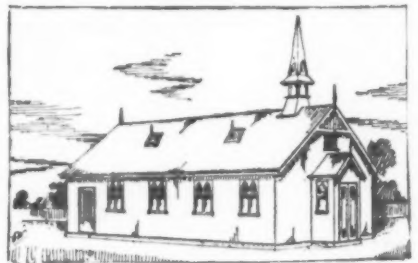
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THE BLACK OPAL

Then he had fought like a lion in a net; in vain, he was one against many. In spite of his frantic resistance they had him down, and Rion Leigh's voice had said: "There's no time to waste. End it!"

There had been a blinding crash of pain, and then—nothingness, till he had found himself at Morestead with a jovial old Plymouth doctor bending over him and telling him that he had had slight concussion and would soon be all right again. But that had been before all the world had turned against him.

Now he had been informed that, in view of his youth, his previous excellent record, and at the urgent intercession of Sir Rion Leigh, his case would not be immediately brought before a court-martial, but he would be given an opportunity before a private commission to explain his position, and, above all, how he came to be in possession of papers clearly proving a treasonable correspondence with the enemy.

And presently he was summoned before the informal court in the Morestead "justicing room." There was the Port Admiral—a martinet for discipline, but who had hitherto shown a fatherly interest in him—and two post-captains, one of whom Dick knew slightly, and—Sir Rion Leigh! As the young man entered with a formal salute to the court, his kinsman came forward, his *grand seigneur* air visibly touched by anxiety and sympathy.

"My dear boy. I am sure you will be able to explain," he began.

It was too much. Dick turned his back upon him. Sir Rion shrugged his shoulders and exchanged a glance with the Admiral. Dick's impetuous action had done him no good, yet how could he touch Rion Leigh's hand?

Requested to make his statement, Dick told his story as briefly and as plainly as he could up to the meeting at Deadman's Deep between the French emissary and Rion Leigh's messenger, his own capture of the packet of papers, and his discovery that the messenger had used the black opal as a token. He was conscious that his audience was not sympathetic, and even to his own ears his story sounded wild enough; but now came the real difficulty.

Asked to describe the messenger, he was forced to refuse. To bring in Diana's dear name was impossible—even life and honour could not be bought at such a price. With

her part cut out he could give no credible account of what had happened between his return to Annery and the discovery of him by the warders in the waggon on the moor. It would have taxed the utmost ingenuity of a skilled diplomat to make a possible tale with such reservations, and poor Dick, accustomed to blunt, simple truth-telling, bungled it hopelessly. The commission could not be blamed for regarding it as a clumsy tangle of lies, since neither in the papers from Leighlands, nor, of course, in those found upon Dick himself, was there anything to connect Sir Rion with the accusations brought against him.

At last Sir Rion, who had listened till now with calm and smiling ease, asked permission to intervene.

"It would have been impossible," he began, "to have allowed such accusations to be brought against me had I not felt sure that no one, knowing me, would attach the least weight to them. But I am none the less grieved that my young kinsman should have been so strangely led astray as to bring such charges against one of his own name and family. I fear we are all compelled to admit that he has in no way cleared himself by this fantastic story of the very grave charges against himself—his desertion of his duty and his possession of these treasonable papers. I have already pleaded all I could in his favour, and not in vain—his youth, his brilliant record—but if there were no more to urge, I fear we should all feel that the case must go on, even if it be to the bitter end. But I have one very sad but all sufficient plea to urge. I believe my unhappy young cousin is to be pitied rather than condemned. His whole conduct, and all we have heard to-day, forces me to the belief that he is not responsible——"

Dick sprang to his feet with a fierce ejaculation.

"Sit down, sir," said the old Admiral sternly. "We have listened to your story; you must show respect to the court now and to Sir Rion, who, let me tell you, has shown himself your best friend so far."

"I am grieved to have to refer to such private matters," went on Sir Rion, as if there had been no interruption, "but the singular state of mind of my other young cousin, Mr. Ambrose Leigh, for some time before his tragic death, is matter of common knowledge. The melancholy delusion under

THE QUIVER

which he laboured, the strange isolation in which he lived, all point to but one sad conclusion. I believe that the shock of his brother's sad death, occurring so immediately on his own return, has seriously affected my cousin Richard's mind and that he has been the unhappy victim of hallucinations ever since. As you know, he believes that his brother appeared to him——"

"Believe! I *saw* him as I see you," broke in Dick passionately. "He lifted his ringless hand——"

Sir Rion smiled pityingly, as if craving the indulgence of the commissioners. "Need I say more," his slight shrug seemed to express. Aloud he went on——

"I feel that in the interests of the country, not to speak of his own, Richard should be protected from himself. The extraordinary circumstances in which he was found on the moor have yet to be cleared up. His own account doesn't help us much, but to me it seems plain that he had fallen into the hands of unscrupulous men who had used him for their traitorous purposes, and were trying to get rid of him. Murder probably awaited him, but fortunately for him they seem to have been scared away before they could carry out their fell design. I put it to you, gentlemen, that the wisest and most merciful course would be to place Richard Leigh under restraint. At large he is merely a danger to himself and the realm."

Great beads of sweat started to Dick's brow. So this was Rion Leigh's revenge! It was worthy of him! And it was frightfully possible. Mad! They would shut him up—him, Dick Leigh, in the pride of his youth, in the fullness of life, in a mad-house—that hell upon earth. Death rather than the unutterable horrors of that living death! To be buried alive while Rion Leigh was left free to carry on his devil's work. He sprang up, tried to speak, but his tongue clave to the roof of his mouth.

Sir Rion went on: "Do we need more proof than what the poor fellow has just given us? His brother's apparition 'raised a ringless hand,' to use his own words. The famous black opal was stolen by the wretch who murdered poor Ambrose. But because the opal has disappeared, it is somehow plain to Richard that I was that wretch, the murderer of my own kin, the robber of the dead! Then, having possessed myself of the ring, I gave it to a mysterious messenger whom he is wholly

unable to describe, who showed it to another mysterious person at a place which no vessel ventures to approach. Really, gentlemen, need I go on? It would be laughable if it were not so pitifully tragic. There is but one conclusion we can come to, unless," with a glance at Dick's convulsed face, "Richard can produce his fabled messenger and the missing opal."

For some minutes there had been an unheeded murmur of remonstrance outside the door; now, suddenly, a woman's voice rose above it in passionate command. The door was flung wide and a girl burst in. Her riding-dress was torn and soiled, the ruddy glory of her hair streamed loose, but her whole being, flushed and aglow, breathed triumph.

Diana! Dick's heart seemed to stop for a beat, and then thundered madly on. He had heard naught of her since that last wild night at Annery. Why was she here? Her whole appearance spoke of stress and struggle. For whom had she come? He was not long left in doubt.

"Here is the messenger—here is the opal!" she cried, and the black stone on her hand seemed to catch fire from the flame in her eyes as she fixed them on Rion Leigh. "There he stands; he tried to keep me prisoner, but by God's help I am here—here to accuse him in his own words: the murderer of his own kin—the robber of the dead! From Ambrose Leigh's dead hand he brought that ring to me. Like poor Ambrose, to my grief and shame, I trusted him wholly. I was his dupe for a time, but never, thank God, his tool."

Over Rion Leigh's tall figure and handsome face there passed a strange thrill like an electric shock, as Diana uttered her ringing denunciation, but with a desperate effort he rallied all his forces and maintained his haughty smiling composure. "The black opal will be your ruin yet." Diana's words, unheeded at the moment, came back upon him with smiting force. In the completeness of his triumph, as it had seemed, in the very insolence of security, he had made the unpardonable mistake of being too sure. And yet how had the girl eluded the vigilance of those whom he had set to guard her, and who had orders to deal with her strictly if there was any attempt at escape? But that mattered little enough now, for sheer ruin faced him, unless he could in some way discredit her tale.

THE QUIVER

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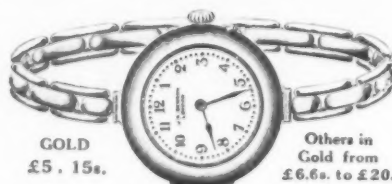
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THE BLACK OPAL

It was no time for nicety. He struck, and struck hard with weapons which, at another time, even he might have shrunk from using.

"This is a day of surprises," he said coolly. "Richard's fairy tale was amazing enough, but this caps it. Truly, a man's foes are those of his own household. First my cousin, now my ward! So here we have the mysterious messenger and the missing opal! We can quite understand now why my cousin declined to describe this unknown emissary. He could do no less in the circumstances, and for such an accomplice! I think there is a very simple explanation of the ring being in Miss Cary's possession, one which will doubtless occur to us all. I need not say more. But, gentlemen," and the haughty voice sank to pained entreaty, "the young lady is under age. As her guardian and her father's friend I beseech you to help me to save her from herself. I was utterly unprepared—how could it be otherwise?—to find her joining my cousin in his wild accusations, but there is a grain of truth in one of her charges. I admit it with the utmost grief, though not for myself. I have had to place my ward under stricter surveillance than that of the lady who has till lately been her companion and friend. I had my reasons, which her appearance here, her reckless avowal bitterly justifies. You must know what it costs me to say this, you will not compel me to use plainer speech—"

"Are you men that you allow this?" burst from Dick Leigh.

The veins on his forehead stood out like dark cords, his blue eyes had their fierce sword gleam, but Diana, who had listened with a proud smile, broke into a sudden scornful laugh.

"So to save yourself you would take Dick's reason from him—he is mad. Oh, I heard it all, and now you would sneer away my fair fame if you could. But I did not escape from 'surveillance' at Annery at the risk of my life—aye, no less than that—to be browbeaten now. When I tell you how this came to me," turning to the officers and holding out her hand on which the opal gleamed and glowed, "when I explain that cipher to you," pointing to the papers before them, "and confirm my evidence with these," drawing out a further handful of papers, "you will at least give me a fair hearing; I ask no more."

"We can do no less, madam," began Admiral Pierce.

"I protest," exclaimed Sir Rion. "I protest against this unhappy girl being allowed to betray herself further. I claim my lawful right as her guardian, which gives me a father's power over her—"

"You cannot, you dare not, refuse me a hearing, when the country's safety is at stake," broke in Diana imploringly. A father's power was a strong claim, not lightly to be set aside in those days.

"We will hear you, madam," said the Admiral.

The despicable weapon, at which in his desperation Rion Leigh had snatched, was like to pierce his own hand. Prejudiced against Dick his judges might have been, but they could not look unmoved on this gracious and generous young creature who, at such evident cost to herself, had come to the rescue. Her clear brow, her candid eyes gave the lie to Rion Leigh and his base suggestion.

"Then I will be no party to it," said Sir Rion, turning swiftly to the door.

"We must ask you to remain, Sir Rion," said Admiral Pierce. "Apart from your relationship to the young lady, it surely behoves you to hear what she has to say. We may need your aid, too, in checking her statements."

"Her statements!" Rion Leigh laughed, and the laugh was not good to hear. "Since she avows herself confederate with Richard Leigh, we may guess what they are likely to be."

"You shall be the judges," said Diana calmly. Exalted emotion had lifted her above a girl's tremors, and turning again to the officers, she poured out the real story of the plot and of Rion Leigh's double treason. Every word rang true and carried its own weight of deadly conviction.

And Rion Leigh? With the easy, mocking smile still stamped on his face in ghastly contrast with its sudden change of hue, he stood outwardly calm, as a tree struck by lightning remains erect and tall for a moment before its crashing fall. This was ruin, utter, complete. There was no defence possible, and he knew it. It was the end! There was no way of escape for him. Aye, there was still one way, and he would not quit the scene unavenged.

There came a wild cry from Dick: "Stop him, take his pistol!"

THE QUIVER

The two younger officers flung themselves on Rion Leigh. Too late! Two shots rang out—one bullet grazed Dick's temple, the other lodged in the busy brain which would spin its subtle evil webs no more.

In horrified silence the little group gathered round the fallen man. He was still smiling; but now that frozen smile seemed a bitter eternal mockery of all the gifts and powers, the schemes and ambitions brought to such a sorry end. Diana suddenly stooped, and spreading her handkerchief pitifully over the dead face, hid that terrible smile.

The old Admiral broke the awed hush. "It is the judgment of God. He is self-condemned, but we may leave his sentence in Higher Hands."



And after that Dick hardly knew what happened. They were in another room, for the justicing room was now a mortuary chamber. There was a confusion of apologies, compliments, congratulations around him. Diana was being eagerly questioned as to her escape, Dick's hand was being vigorously shaken over and over again.

"My dear boy, I'll make it known in the right quarter. His Majesty shall know—the country owes everything to you—you

and this brave young lady," Admiral Pierce was saying, or something like that, for with the singing of Rion Leigh's bullet still in his ears, and the sight of Diana's face ravishing his heart and eyes, Dick was still hardly conscious of what was passing.

And then, somehow, everyone had melted away. He and Diana were alone amid a great hush of wonder and trembling joy, as alone as if there were no other creatures in the world but themselves. Nor were there at that moment to them. Each was all the world to the other. Then each was holding the other's hand, each was babbling the other's name, each was asking eager questions—

"Di, how did you escape from Annerly?—you would be guarded only too well—"

"Oh, Dick, as if that mattered. How did you fare on that dreadful journey?"—till suddenly Dick swept it all aside.

"We'll have a whole lifetime, please God, to answer each other's questions, and I don't know if it'll be any too long. But Di, there's one question I must have answered in words—Oh, Di, can it be true—was it for love of me, dear heart, that you've done all—dared all—"

There was a moment's pause, and then Diana's answer came low and clear:

"My lifetime must be the answer to that—and it won't be any too long!"

[THE END.]



"LITTLE FOLKS" CHRISTMAS NUMBER

"LITTLE FOLKS" for December forms a grand Christmas Number for young people. There are three coloured plates—by Lawson Wood, etc, and over seventy splendid illustrations in colour and black-and-white. The number contains ten stories, the usual Clubs, Puzzles, etc., and, in fact, it is a budget of good things that every child ought to have this Christmastide.

The price is 7d. net.

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and so evident,
That it will glimmer
through a blind man's eye."*

Earl, Henry VI
Act 5 Scene IV



Earl of Somerset

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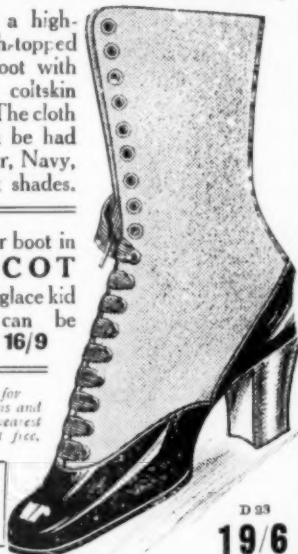
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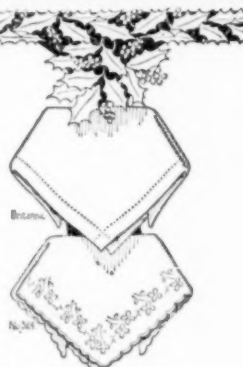
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The Christmas Spirit

ONE spirit rules the world to-day,
Radiant with love and cheer—
The Christmas spirit that may stay
With us throughout the year.
The mistletoe and holly bring
Us near to God's own plan.
The joyous Christmas bell doth ring
Peace and good will to man.

Then wherefore limit to one day
The love our hearts would show,
When it is ever God's wise way
Each day gifts to bestow?
Could we but in our hearts enshrine
That grace which burns and glows
When Christmas bells begin to chime
And love's cup overflows—

Then every day and every hour
Some gift would find its way,
Charged with a Christlike love and power
That naught could dim or stay,
Into the lives that need our cheer,
Our help—the help that springs
From loving service, for we know
All other gifts have wings.

HELEN M. RICHARDSON.

The Warning

A CLEAR-MINDED farmer in one of the rural churches gave a unique definition of conscience not long ago.

"I've often noticed," he said, "when driving my mowing machine, that when there's something gone wrong with it there's pretty sure to be a warning. If the gear is getting dry or out of place, and doesn't run right, it gives a hard, squeaky crunch that

lets me know there's trouble coming, and if I am wise I stop and investigate.

"Now it seems to me conscience is a good deal like that. It's the crunch my spiritual nature gives to warn me when there's a wrong in front of it. It isn't a pleasant thing to hear, perhaps, but it's very valuable as a reminder of danger ahead."

Let us heed the warning as soon as we hear it, and so prevent danger and damage.



THE man who can look upon the sunrise or sunset without emotion, who sees nothing in the everlasting hills but barriers to be tunnelled, is not a good man; there is something wrong or lacking in him. No man can be a good man who is not in sympathy with Nature.—REV. W. J. DAWSON.



The White Comrade

MANY curious stories of the supernatural come from the different battle fronts. Most of us have heard of the Angels of Mons, that celestial company that is said to have come suddenly to the rescue of a retreating English force. Less familiar is the White Comrade, of whom a letter in the *Church News* tells us:

"The wounded have been visited by a figure in white, whom they call the 'White Comrade.' A soldier who had scoffed at the story was wounded himself one day, and, as he lay helpless, the White Comrade appeared and began to bind up his wounds. The soldier noticed something wrong with the White Comrade's hand, and said, 'You are wounded in the hand.'

THE QUIVER

"'Yes,' replied the White Comrade, 'it is an old wound that has been reopened.'"

To-day we have come to speak doubtfully of the supernatural; but we shall hardly find it in our hearts to grudge a wounded soldier, suffering and alone, the beautiful and comforting vision of the White Comrade. Moreover, whatever we think of the story itself, may it not lead us to ponder more deeply on the real White Comrade, the Comforter, the Christ within us, "the true Light, which lighteth every man"? That Comrade, if we seek Him earnestly, will come to us on every battlefield of life, will bind up more than our physical wounds, and lift our struggling lives up into an existence beautiful, joyous, filled with love and the desire to serve. The saints are those who have found the White Comrade and who have become filled with His spirit. Have they not been the wonder-workers, the conquerors, the happy people of the world?

What have they to tell us of this life in God? "The Spirit of God," says Ruysbroek, that man of "incredible goodness," "breathes us out toward love and good works, and it breathes us in to rest and enjoyment. Without the exercise of love we can never possess God, and he who thinks or feels otherwise is deceived."

"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and everyone that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God."



The Flag of the Soul

"THE smile is the flag of the soul," says Dan Crawford, the famous African missionary. What does a man smile at? The answer reveals the character. If he smiles tolerantly at evil, he is a traitor. If he smiles mockingly at good, he is an infidel. If he smiles happily over good things, and cheerfully in adversity, and thankfully up to God, his flag is of the right sort.



A Good Beginning

SOME things are only experiments. If they are not begun well, they may be torn down and the work done over again. Other things are more permanent—there is but one beginning. Such is a life. Everything depends on the way you begin it. No one can have his life back to live it the second time.

A captain once explained the good points and faults of his steamer. In many things she was equal to any vessel that ploughed the waves, but, by some accident in building, the keel had been slightly twisted. That

twist had gone through the whole ship, and it had made all her movements so crooked that it was hard to steer her straight. She was always influenced by that first bad twist.



The Yuletide Joy

O! holy, happy Christmas morn,
Thy dawn dissolves the Christless night;
Belt all the world with holy light,
The light unlit till Christ was born.

We hail with joyous, sacred song,
The Prince of Peace, the God-in-man,
Whose coming solves redemption's plan,
The joy of all the ransomed throng.

Cease, Shiloh seers, your further dreams;
Lo! brighter visions beam afar,
For ye have seen Messiah's star,
Whose glory down the ages streams.

Ye seraph legions of the sky,
Who with your songs of peace, good will,
O'er Bethlehem's plains did shepherds thrill,
Hymn evermore sweet praise on high.

Ye mortals, let your anthems ring,
Your joyous hallelujahs rise,
To join the anthems of the skies
With praise to the eternal King.

Good will to man! Glad tidings roll,
That herald peace, that muffle strife,
That quicken men to nobler life,
And joy shall spread from pole to pole!

REV. A. MESSLER QUICK.



The Response of a Look

CORREGGIO, with the passion for art that burned in his soul, looked upon the great painting of the master and studied and thought it out, forgetting himself in it until the genius of Raphael became for him a master passion, and, looking upon the great ideal that lured him on, his soul took fire and he said, "I too am a painter." So do we as we look upon the character of Christ find the great response rise up in our hearts, the identification of our very best with Him, and in our failure and in our love we too cry, "I too am a Christian." He embodies the chief end of man, and what He is, He enables us to become.

"Yea, thro' life, death, thro' sorrow and thro' sinning

He shall suffice me, for He hath sufficed:
Christ is the end, for Christ was the beginning,
Christ the beginning, for the end is Christ."

THE QUIVER

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1/3



CHOOSING THE CHILDREN'S PRESENTS



"**W**HATEVER shall I do?" groaned Uncle George. "Here I have to find Christmas presents for twelve—or is it thirteen?—nephews and nieces, and they want six shillings for this little bit of a doll that Doris will break in five minutes!"

"Toys are much dearer now we get none from Germany," you say? Anyhow, I am not going to buy German toys any more, however cheap—and nasty—they may be. . . . Well, if you've nothing better to offer I must try somewhere else, but really it's no end of a job this year."

Uncle George left the crowded shop impatiently, and, crossing the road, his eye was arrested by a book-shop with juvenile volumes attractively displayed. "Why not books this year?" he said to himself. "Something the kiddies can't break, and that will do them good instead of making them ill." And he laughed—perhaps a little feebly, for he was getting tired.

"Some books for the children? Certainly," said the polite assistant. "How is this for a start?" And he took down a copy of *Cassell's Children's Annual*. It was a handsome production, illustrated by such artists as Harry Rountree, C. E. Brock, H. R. Miller, Mabel Lucie Attwell, Florence Mary



Anderson, Ernest Aris, etc., and full of lovely stories. "Just the thing for Doris," murmured Uncle George, delightedly; "she always insists on something superior. I'll have that."

"Now Irene, another of my nieces, is a regular book-worm, and when she starts she wants plenty to read."

"What's this—*Little Folks* Winter Volume? Why, I remember *Little Folks* when I was a boy, and a wonderful magazine it was then. Hum—it looks even better now."



Four serials, heaps of short stories, hundreds of illustrations—and plenty of them coloured ones, too."

"It's selling very well," observed the assistant. "You see, it will do equally well for all children from six to sixteen, and there is enough reading in it to keep a whole family busy for weeks. The older children delight in the clubs and competitions; you know, there are thousands of members in the Nature Club, and it teaches them to look around them and understand Nature. Thousands, too, belong to the Library Club, which helps them to know a good book when they see it, and choose the best instead of the trash. If I may say so, sir, my own daughter belongs to it, and is keeping a Book Diary for the competition. Then, you

THE QUIVER

see, the older ones can read the section 'For Very Little Folks' to their younger brothers and sisters. We have it in paper



boards for 3s. 6d. net, and in cloth for 5s. net. Wonderful value for money."

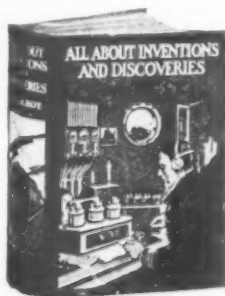
"The very thing for Irene, and for Phyllis, too. Just put me down for two copies, cloth bound."

"Ralph will be fifteen next year. What do you suggest for him? He has quite a lurid imagination, I am afraid. Haven't you something exciting, but above the 'penny dreadful' order?"

"Here is the very thing," said the invaluable assistant. "*The British Boy's Annual* (5s.), with stories and articles by Sir Harry H. Johnston, Captain F. S. Brereton, Captain Charles Gilson, Eric Wood, Percy F. Westerman, S. Walkey, and, in fact, all the best writers for boys. It is illustrated in colours and black-and-white, and is, as you see, a handsome production."

"I'll have it," said Uncle George; "and have you one like it for his sister Gwen?—she's just turned sixteen. I don't want any sickly sentimental stuff, you know, but something a school-girl will enjoy and keep."

"The *British Girl's Annual* is just the thing," replied the assistant. "It is an unusually good issue this year, with stories and articles by Mrs. Baillie Reynolds, Mrs. de Horne Vaizey, Marjorie Bowen, Dorothea Moore, Helen Wallace, Christine Chaundler, Ethel Talbot, Angela Brazil, and so on. There is a long complete story by Violet M. Methley, and I think the young lady will enjoy 'A Father's Letters to his Daughter' and the other features."



"Capital—capital! That's five off the list. Now what have you for Jim, the budding young engineer?"

Uncle George was fairly started. He bought *All About Inventions and Discoveries*, by F. A. Talbot (6s.), for Jim, and *With Jellicoe in the North Sea*, by Captain Frank H. Shaw (3s. 6d.), to go with it. Then he remembered his younger brother James's children, and bought *Miss Quixote*, by Violet M. Methley (3s. 6d.), for the eldest girl, and *The Boy's Book of Pioneers*, by Eric Wood (3s. 6d.), for the eldest boy, the younger children getting *Bo-Peep* (2s. 6d. net) and *Tiny Tots* (1s. 6d. net). He was quite at a loss what to get for Pauline, with her love of the old world and the beautiful, but quite agreed that she would be delighted with *My Book of Beautiful Legends* (6s.).

Finally, he remembered his favourite twin nieces, aged three, and purchased for them those two charming little volumes in the TWINKLETOES SERIES (1s. net each), *The Little Wee Cupid* and *The Magic Kiss*.

"The most dainty little volumes I've seen for a long time," exclaimed Uncle George; "and I know their mother will be delighted with the charming little illustrations as much as they will."

"And where do all these delightful books come from?"

Cassell's, you say? I'll make a note of it.

"Certainly I'll take a catalogue. 'Cassell's Books for Boys and Girls'—I'll look

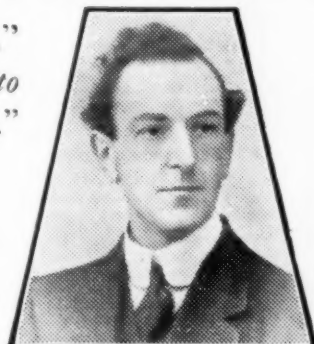


it through, and order some more when the birthdays come round!"

. Cassell's Juvenile Catalogue will be sent on receipt of a postcard addressed to Cassell and Co., Ltd., La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C.

I TOOK CICFA—THE ONLY CURE FOR STOMACH & BOWEL INDIGESTION

*"Now I eat whatever I desire."
"I wish all Indigestion sufferers to
know that every word I say is true."*



READ THE EXPLANATION.—If you are suffering from Indigestion, whatever the cause may be, you are likely to think that a remedy which cures others may not suit your case, because you think yours is different, and your symptoms may be different; but the root causes of all cases of uncomplicated Indigestion are always the same, that is, there is not enough of the Digestive Ferments which Nature must have to digest the Albuminous food in the Stomach and also to digest the Starchy food in the Bowel.

Without these Digestive Ferments, one person will suffer with Heartburn, Wind, and Gas-Rising, White Coated Tongue, Sharp Headache, Blotched Complexion, Red Nose, Flushed Face, etc.; while another will suffer from Flatulence, Bilious Symptoms, caused by obstructed Bile Circulation, Acidity with teeth on edge, and attacks of Gout and Rheumatism, and Constipation, with all the misery which it causes; but, whether you have some or all of these symptoms, **YOU CAN BE PERFECTLY CURED ONLY BY A REMEDY WHICH CONTAINS NATURE'S**

DIGESTIVE FERMENTS. Without those ferments you may "happen" to get well, but with them you cannot fail to be cured, and **THOSE FERMENTS ARE FOUND ONLY IN CICFA.** Mr. David realises these facts, and, having known the sufferings from Indigestion, and the joy of health, with the pleasure of eating what he pleases, he wishes all sufferers to know that Cicfa cured him, and that his words are true.

NOW READ MR. DAVID'S WORDS.

Mr. David writes: "Dear Sirs,—Some time ago I wrote to you for a sample of your Indigestion Cure, Cicfa. The sample gave me such instant relief that I continued by purchasing the small tubes. I had been suffering with indigestion for about two-and-a-half years, and had tried several other remedies, but I found them all failures. Then I took Cicfa, and found it necessary to take only three or four tubes, and I was and am now able to eat whatever I desire. I think honestly that Cicfa is a most wonderful cure, and deserves the highest praise. I always strongly recommend it to any of my friends that I find are afflicted with Indigestion. I really cannot find words to express my gratitude, nor my pleasure at having found a remedy which really cures Indigestion as Cicfa has cured mine. I only hope that if you publish this letter those sufferers from Indigestion who read it will believe that every word I say is true, and will immediately take Cicfa, the only certain cure. Thanking you for my present health and for being able to enjoy life again, yours truly, F. L. DAVID."

Cicfa has been taken up by over 11,000 British doctors, many of whom have written

us of the splendid results secured upon themselves and their patients.

IN WAR TIME your mind affects your Digestion more than you realise. You know how worry often affects the Stomach. Indeed the whole alimentary tract. Nausea and even vomiting often result from anxiety. If you are worried at present (who is not worried?) your Digestion is weakened, while on the other hand your ability to resist worry is lessened through weak digestion. Keep your digestion perfect, not by taking Purgatives, which upset it, not by Dieting with consequent Starvation, which increases the Indigestion, but by eating liberally and regularly and taking Cicfa to assist Digestion, because Cicfa alone contains those natural Digestive Ferments which, when present in sufficient quantity and in absolute purity, make Indigestion impossible and make Digestion perfect and certain.

Instead of taking Soda, Magnesia, or other alkalis to neutralise Uric Acid in the blood for the cure of Rheumatism, Gout, etc., you should prevent the formation of the Uric Acid by ensuring complete digestion of the food, followed by complete oxidation and assimilation, for in that way you prevent the formation of excessive Uric Acid, which so often causes Rheumatism, Gout, etc.; Cicfa ensures such complete digestion of the food. That is why so many persons are surprised to find that when Cicfa cures their Indigestion their rheumatism has also gone.

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Prices, 1/3 and 3/4, or Test It

ABSOLUTELY FREE

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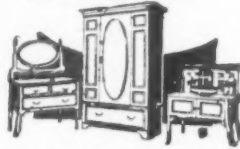
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SEND TWO 1d. STAMPS FOR SAMPLE.

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FOR ALL PURPOSES
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LAWRIE & SMITH'S Real Scotch Wincey



This ideal fabric gives warmth without weight, drapes beautifully, and can be had in such a lovely range of colourings and patterns as to meet even the most fastidious taste. It then it is unshrinkable and fast in colour — indeed, it improves with washing, while its world-famed long-wearing qualities make for economy.

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LAWRIE & SMITH (Dept. F.)
Real Scotch Wincey House, Ayr, Scotland.



Peace Amid the War

CHRISTMAS approaches—the most fiery Christmas in our annals, when war is taking its toll of our sons and brothers, and the nation moves on at the price of never-ending sacrifice. Yet we, in this sea-girt isle, comparatively speaking are enjoying the blessings of peace. We go about our daily work, and eat our daily bread, whilst the brave lads on the sea and in the trenches are between us and the foe. As one of our returned chaplains says: "Every minute of safety and freedom we are now enjoying has been purchased for us by human blood." For those who would complain there is plenty to complain about, but for those of us in this country who are wise, there is a great deal to be thankful for. As the clouds of battle are blown away, we see more and more clearly what a near thing it has sometimes been—how thin has been the line between "holding on" and defeat. We look forward with courage and hope—but we look backward with thankfulness.

The Obligation

HOW can we translate our thankful spirit into deeds? As that same chaplain is reported to have said to his hearers: "If you, my able-bodied brothers, have by some means been exempted from all military service, and think that by paying your neighbour one-and-twopence a day to go out and die for you, you can cry quits, you will find that you are not going to get off so easily as that." Those who are not "able-bodied" in the military sense are, too, by no means exempt from the obligation. It is "up to us" to be thankful—and much more.

Where Charity Comes In

A GAIN and again it is emphasised that our soldiers do not want "charity," but justice: proper allowances, proper pensions, proper provision made out of the nation's purse. We must pay our taxes ungrudgingly; but after that, there is a

wide sphere where legitimate "charity" comes in, and, in this little Christmas talk, I want to put it to my readers that it is "up to them" to translate the thankfulness they ought to feel into some very real and very self-sacrificing channels.

For the Supply of Heroes

A CHRISTMAS gift of thankfulness! To whom should we make it? After the evacuation of Gallipoli four Military Medals were awarded to one Anzac division. Out of the four recipients *three were old Barnardo boys*. That is just one indication of what Barnardo's "waifs and strays" are doing. There are some thousands in the great armies fighting for us. Years ago they were rescued, cared for, saved by the great Barnardo agency; to-day they have fought for us, and heroes they have proved to be out of very unpromising stuff. *How much will you send to Dr. Barnardo's in recognition of what they have done for us?*

Out in the Deep

OUT in the darkness, amid the cold blasts of the winter storms, are thousands of deep-sea fishermen. They do not look so picturesque as the gay lieutenants about town—indeed, they are never seen about town. With their mysterious tackle and craft out there in the North Sea, they are guarding Britain's shores, and dealing, in their quiet but very effective way, with the submarine menace. It is hazardous work, and many fall victims. The Royal Mission to Deep Sea Fishermen is looking after these men. *How much will you send as a thankoffering for the safety these men have provided?*

The Men of the Future

EARLIER in the war the brave men of the *Aboutkir*, *Formidable*, *Good Hope*, *Hawke*, *Invincible*, and many other vessels

THE QUIVER

laid down their lives for us, and words failed us to express the deep sense of admiration and gratitude we felt. But they left children behind them, and at once the Homes for Little Boys at Farningham opened their doors and took in thirty of these little lads. For fifty years they have been doing similar things—and turning out men who have served in the Army, the Navy, as pioneers of empire all over the world. *How much will you send to the Homes for Little Boys in gratitude for what they have done and are doing?*

The Incurables

WE are debtors to those who have died for us—a debt we can never pay; they are gone, beyond the reach of our care, or the need of it. To all those who in our defence are maimed for life, maimed incurably, broken beyond all hope of recovery, we owe a debt which we can never fully cancel. There are officers, paralysed, or otherwise incurably incapacitated, who for the remainder of their days must be weak and helpless. The British Home and Hospital for Incurables at Streatham is taking care of such. Some of our readers could, if they liked, give £1,000 for a Memorial Bed in the Home; while most could give a little towards helping those whose fate, after all, is the worst of any. *How much will you give for the incurables?*

Waifs and Strays

WHEN the father is away, oft-times the children are in parlous state. The late Lord Kitchener said: "I know that the Church of England Waifs and Strays Society has done, and is doing, good work, especially by its care of the families of those who are fighting for us." The Society has over 4,000 children under its care. Lord Kitchener gave his life for us. *How much will you give to the Waifs and Strays Society which he commended?*

For the Wounded Horses

WE think of the wounded soldiers, but what of that great army of dumb animals who are serving so faithfully in a quarrel certainly not their own? "Care for my horse, mate," says many a wounded soldier. Will you let him ask in vain? The R.S.P.C.A. has a fund for Sick and Wounded Horses. *How much will you give in recognition of those poor, dumb, suffering creatures?*

Too Much?

HAVE I asked too much? Probably if I had devoted all my space to just one of these things I could have touched your hearts—and your purses—to more effect. But they are all doing good work—work that so badly needs to be done just now. I know about the Flag Days, and the many, many other claims. Yet our brave soldiers have, in such great numbers, given their all. Can anything we do be too much? In all earnestness I ask my readers this Christmastide to take stock of their obligations. Much that is useless can be cut out of the feast this year; we can celebrate Christ's coming better this year without the usual trappings. Will it not be the true expression of the Christmas spirit if we make thankofferings to those great institutions which are doing our work under such difficulties in these trying times? I shall be most glad to receive and forward the thankofferings of my readers. Small or large, they will be very gratefully welcomed. Send me a postal order or a cheque; just say what you would like it to go to, or if you would like me to divide it, and send to "The Editor, THE QUIVER, La Belle Sauvage, London, E.C., marking your envelope "Thanksgiving." I am sure, if you will do this, you will have a much happier Christmas in consequence.

With my best wishes for a peaceful and happy Christmas for all my readers,

Your friend,

The Editor

"THE QUIVER" FUNDS

The following is a list of contributions received up to and including Oct. 27, 1916:—

For Dr. Barnardo's Homes: E. J., 10s.; H. D., 20s.; H. D. B., 20s.; H. D., 20s.

For Dr. Grenfell's Work: E. H. Daniell, 5s.; Lady Musgrave, 21s.

For The Children's Country Holiday Fund: S. L. E., 15s.

For The Fresh Air Fund: N. and A. Scott, £2.

For The Ragged School Union: H. D., 20s.

For The Rev. F. Swainson's Work: "A Reader," £2 10s.

For The Mackintosh Home: "A Reader," 10s.

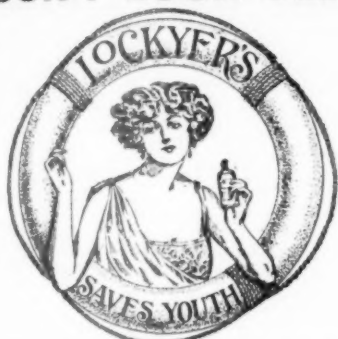
For The Rev. E. C. Pitt Johnson's Work: "Isolde," 20s.

THE LEAGUE OF LOVING HEARTS

The following are the sums received from old and new members up to and including Oct. 27, 1916:—

5s. from Mrs. C. E. Aspinall; 4s. from E. Jones; 1s. from Pte. A. Wilkinson.

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But restore your grey and faded hairs to their natural colour with

LOCKYER'S SULPHUR HAIR RESTORER

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Lockyer's gives health to the Hair and restores the natural colour. It cleanses the scalp, and makes the most perfect Hair Dressing.

This world-famed Hair Restorer is prepared by the great Hair Specialists, J. PERRY & Co., Ltd., 12 Bedford Laboratories, London, S.E., and can be obtained direct from them by post or from any chemists and stores throughout the world.

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Is the lady who possesses a soft and beautiful skin, with a clear complexion. Would you covet those priceless gifts, Massage your Face, Hands, and Arms with **M. F. T. SOCIETY SKIN FOOD COMPLEXION WAX**. Yes, this Every-Weather Treasure corrects extremes of Sun, Wind, Fog, Frost, etc. Removes away Wrinkles or other traces of Work, Worry, and Years. **22** and **49** post free. It prevents Hairs growing on Face.

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that makes the guns
shout "Victory!"*

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PRICES
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Should a Child have a Night Light?

(No. 6.)

*Dr. LE GRAND KERR, in
"The Care and Training of Children."*

"FROM a knowledge of the immediate and remote effects of frightening a child I am assured that a large part of the self-consciousness, the introspection, the nerve exhaustion and hysteria of later childhood and adult life, had their beginnings in the repeated awakenings of fear in the young child."

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For Large Light and Heat.

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ROYAL CASTLE or CHILDS'.

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Nectar of the gods was never sipped with such gusto as that early morning cup of tea, steaming hot, and as fresh as when made—from your **THERMOS**

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No form of bathing accomplishes such perfect cleanliness as the combined HOT-AIR and VAPOUR BATH. It not only cleanses the outer surface, but also opens the pores, eliminates impure matters, and stimulates a healthy flow of life's principle—the blood, clears the skin, rewarms the body, quiets the nerves, rests the tired, and creates that delightful feeling of invigorated health and strength. Physicians recommend it for the prevention and cure of Colds, Influenza, Rheumatism, Kidney and Liver Troubles, Skin Diseases, etc.

Our Patent Folding Calverts embrace every desirable feature and provide several levels of intensity, such as—**Absolutely Safe Outside Heater; Heat Regulator; Exit is easy and immediate—no assistant required.**

Write for "BATH BOOK," No. 24.

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It is a simple portable Milk Warmer. The milk is heated in a few moments at a cost of **less than a farthing** by the small safety-spirit lamp, which consumes ordinary spirit. The spirit stove is detachable from the main part, and can be used for other purposes.

The "Darling" being constructed entirely of copper and brass, is practically everlasting.


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THE SHOE OF SERVICE FOR OUTDOOR LADIES.



FIVE

Brogue Buckle shoe. Always smart and stylish for Town or Country.

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CASH PAID
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IT IS A SHOE THAT'S SURE TO SATISFY THE WEARER

Splendidly made from Best Black or Tan Leathers. Walking sole. Cuban Heel. All Sizes and Fittings.

Send us the shape outline of foot and Heel. Yours with love Fred.

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Motto:
"For God and the Empire: By Love Serving
One Another"

Object:
The cultivation personally, and the extension in
all possible ways, of the highest ideals of Citizen-
ship, and of love and service for our Empire



*The Corner,
Christmas, 1916*

MY DEAR CHUMS,—Yet again we have to exchange our Christmas greetings under the world-shadow of war. But it would seem that the shadow is not quite so heavy as when our last December number appeared. Dark days—perhaps the darkest of the long, long months—may be ahead of us, but we will wish for one another the most restful and happy Christmas that is possible. You will be looking forward to this—my Christmas greeting to each Companion—in your various corners of the world; and I, in mine, shall watch for yours.

In many of our homes it will be impossible to have anything like our "usual Christmas," because of dear boys who are away "over there," or who, during the year, have said "Good-bye" to us for the last time here. Yet we shall, most of us, have to do our best for the sake of the little ones. And after all, though we may not

have the fun and frolic to which we have been accustomed, we cannot let the Christmas festival slip past unheeded. For it stands for so much. Try for yourself to strip it of all the luxury and trimming that have been tacked on to it, and think for yourself what it would mean had there been no Christmas at all—for the world at all, I mean. How the Spirit that we may call the Spirit of Christmas has influenced the whole of the nations; and, even in spite of the war, was it ever so excellent as it is to-day in its power, in its inspiration of love and sacrifice? I think not.

In a beautiful chapter in one of his books, the poet-preacher, Dr. George Matheson, asked:

"Think you that a Pagan born to-day would be in the same position as a Pagan born before the first Christmas? Not though through all his life he should never hear of Jesus. Imagine that you and I were standing, strangers to each other, on the opposite shores of a silent sea—a sea that had never known a ripple on its bosom. Imagine that into that silent sea I were to cast a pebble. You would not see the pebble; you would not detect the hand; you would not recog-



Lena.

THE QUIVER

nise the agent; but you would be influenced all the same. The ripple would reach you. It would go all over the water—the length of it, the breadth of it. It would be as when the Spirit of God moved on the face of the great deep; the silence would speak."

And then Dr. Matheson points out how Christianity has "thrown a pebble into" the "dead seas of men," and "they have rippled all over."

"They have caught the influence of deeds they have never known. The ships upon their bosom have begun to move, stirred by an atmosphere that belongs to other lands. The movement of the Christian West has accelerated the un-Christian East. India marches quicker; China steps more lightly; Japan becomes almost European. Lands that have not caught the light of the Portrait have received the glow of those who have seen it: for good, as well as evil, is contagious. . . ."

We can say—wherever we may be—"The ripple has reached me. How best am I to pass on its influence?" I cannot lay down a hard and fast rule for you, nor can you for me. But each of us has some gleam of light. You remember that Evangelist said to Christian, "Seest thou yonder shining light?" Christian said, "I think I do." Then said Evangelist, "Keep that light in your eye and go up directly thereto; so shalt thou see the gate." It is by following the light that we have—loyally, perseveringly—that we find the true way of life and come into the fuller glow; by doing the little things faithfully, that we fit ourselves for the greater. Perhaps our opportunities for spreading the "Christmas Spirit" this year may seem very tiny and insignificant. But let us keep ourselves as fit a dwelling place for that Spirit as possible, trying to let its ruling be evident in ourselves—and that is all that matters—for the time being.

I met with a quaint Christmas legend in my reading the other day; perhaps it will be fresh to some of you. It ran like this:

A very poor-rich man kept his Christmas all alone. He did not approve of Christmas at all, and grudging "even the bit of wood for his miserable grate." Choosing the smallest chump that he could, he sat



Philip.

by his hearth alone, shivering, and he fell asleep in the cold. Now, while he slept he dreamed that he heard a voice in the room, and, looking up, he saw a little Child, and he knew by the glory that surrounded it that it was Jesus. And the Child said, as he fixed his wonderful eyes on the old man, "Jesus is cold." Now the old man had no great amount of religion to boast of, but still he bestirred himself a little, and tried to kindle his poor stick into a flame. But the Child came no nearer to the fire, and stood still in a distant part of the room, and said again, "Jesus is cold." "Then why don't you go to the farm-house down the lane?" said the old man; "you'll be warm enough there." "But," said the Child, "it is you who make me cold. Oh, you are so cold, you make me cold." "Then what can I do to warm you?" said the old man. "You must give me a golden coin," answered the Child. "There is my money chest," answered the old man; "you can open it without the key, I'll be bound." "Oh, yes, I could open it, but you must give me the key." After fumbling about the old miser found his key and gave it to the little Child, who took from the box a golden coin. And then a miracle happened, for as the Child held up the gold piece, lo! the dull and dingy old room became bright and cheerful, and a fire such as had not been in

the old grate for many a year kindled into a glorious blaze; but, most curious of all, the Child began to make changes in the room. First he put up some trim bits of laurel and holly, saying, "That is for life"; and then he put upon the shelf two tall candles, saying, "These are for light"; and then he gave the fire another stir, and as the blaze rose higher he said, "That is for love." Then, stranger still, the Child opened the door, and there came in a young widow who lived in the lane near by, and a rheumatic old man, and some orphan children, and the table was spread, and as they all sat down to a merry meal, the young Child said, "Jesus is warm now." And the old man, quite startled and amazed, said, "Oh, Lord, I think I am warmer too"; and then, all in a moment, although the feast remained the same, and the lights and the holly and the fire, and the guests continued their enjoyment, the little Child suddenly became a child no longer, and the old man was awed, as he knew, by undoubted signs, that it was the Lord in all His manlike and Divine majesty. "Know, then," said He, "that although I am in heaven, I am everywhere, for everywhere is heaven if I am there. But know also that although I cannot suffer as I once suffered—and you cannot know what I mean—when My children are cold and hungry and tired, My human body which I have with Me in heaven is hungry and cold and tired too; and whenever My children are made to be warm and happy, or even cheerful, then I feel it too—then Jesus is warm; and even in the little nameless acts of love, like offering a flower or kindling a fire, out of love to Me, I know it all. Did I not tell you, 'Inasmuch as ye

DO YOU "HUE" or Still WASTE COAL?



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EAU-DE-COLOGNE

The Genuine Article

Is there a perfume more peculiarly familiar to our British homes than the fragrant, reviving and refreshing odour of Eau-de-Cologne? At once as indispensable for the toilet, or in the bath room, as it is in the sick chamber or in the ladies' boudoir. The one article deemed to be an essential possession of every British matron and British maid, as well as of every British nurse.

The name "Eau-de-Cologne"—for he it remembered "Eau-de-Cologne" is merely a name for a specific recipe—was given to designate a spirituous perfume originally prepared in the City of Cologne, but since that day there have arisen other brands than the original, some of which even *excel in virtue* the mother of them all; a fact that has been particularly discovered during the present war, when the original is very justly out of favour.

This revelation of super-excellence has been peculiarly realised in the case of the brand known as Luce's Eau-de-Cologne, first made in the Isle of Jersey—"The Isle of Flowers"—in the year 1837, when Queen Victoria came to the throne, a fitting emblem of a fragrant reign. It, therefore, has now for seventy-nine years enjoyed an enviable popularity that has become enhanced to an enormous extent during the past few years. Indeed it is not too much to say that there is to-day no brand of Eau-de-Cologne so favourably received or so popular as Luce's Isle of Jersey; far excelling all the productions of Continental competition, affording to the patriotic British woman an opportunity of supporting her own country, and at the same time of obtaining an article in every way superior to the cheap Continental imitations upon the market.

A few years ago the patriotic makers of this patriotic preparation presented a quantity of their famous Eau-de-Cologne for sale in aid of the funds of the Middlesex Hospital, when no less a sum than one thousand guineas was handed to Prince Alexander of Teck on behalf of the funds of the Institution.

Since the opening of the present war some five thousand bottles of Luce's Eau-de-Cologne have been given by the Directorate of the firm to the British Red Cross Society, and the writer is told that this magnificent gift is even about to be duplicated. Surely a firm so generously patriotic deserves the support of every reader.

Fortunately there need be no difficulty in procuring Luce's Eau-de-Cologne, for it is obtainable of all Chemists in all parts of the world, of all Perfumers and at all Stores, the proprietors of these establishments being glad of the ability to supply a genuine and superior British article in place of the productions of the German chemists. Are you thinking of making a present? Let it be "Luce's." F. B.

Points for Parents

THE FAMILY INCOME MADE SECURE

THE earnest wish of every Husband and Father is to leave at his death a provision that shall relieve his family from all monetary anxiety. Heedlessness of this subject is rare nowadays; the keen struggle for existence "rubs it in" to a man's mind. Yet many put off action and put it off again till it is too late.

How best to do this is a conundrum that has puzzled many a clever man. The subject may often have been in his mind and been as often dismissed, simply because he could not decide upon a really satisfactory method of making such a provision. The friend who could show him a sound and safe way of securing to his widow and his children a definite annual income would be a friend indeed.

Such a friend—to the man himself—to his wife—to his children, the writer claims to be. It cannot be too widely known that a secure and definite annual income for a widow and her children is provided by either of two policies issued by the "North British and Mercantile." These are the Twentieth Century Option Policy, and the Five Per Cent. Investment Policy, and their cost is so reasonable that many a reader could afford one which would give his relatives at his decease a certain income of £50 or £100 per annum. The policies admit of the income being commuted, in whole or in part, for a cash payment on a liberal scale, if circumstances make this useful to the survivors.

Space does not admit of entering into details, but we are sure that many will be wise enough to write for Booklets which clearly describe the merits and working of these remarkable policies. They can be obtained upon application—a post card will do—for Booklet No. 20 to the Life Manager, North British and Mercantile Insurance Company, 61 Threadneedle Street, London, E.C.

"THE assurance of life is one of the most Christian things that I know; for what is it? It is taking the load that would crush one family and spreading it over twenty thousand families, so that a mere drop lights upon each instead of overwhelming torrent falling upon one. It seems to me a beautiful illustration of bearing one another's burdens. And therefore, let every young man entering upon life, every head of a family, whether high or low, set his house in order and assure his life."—REV. DR. CUMMING.

OUR YOUNG PEOPLE'S PAGES

did it unto one of the least of these, ye did it unto Me? And so *Jesus is warm.*"

A Picture and News from Canada

On the very morning on which this letter goes to the printers I get this new photograph of Lena, and the news that she is "developing into a healthy, bonny young woman." She is still with the kind foster mother—who is devoted to her—and is being coached specially so that, if the way opens for her to attend the High School, she may be ready to pass the entrance examination. This is indeed good news, is it not? And you who have been so generously helping our Fund up, so that we can help Lena to be fitted thoroughly to help herself, may well be glad. I hoped for news also of David and Violet, but perhaps there has been a delay in the mails and we may hear in time for our next Corner. If any of you would like to send cards and greetings to Philip, please let me have them at the office by December 15th, and I will see that they are in the hands of those who will give them to him on Christmas Day.

1916 has been a good year for our Violet Fund, notwithstanding all the many claims we—even the youngest schoolgirl and school-boy among our Companions—have had. We have been greatly helped by the special efforts of the Galashiels, Wood Green, and Cambridge Companions; but I am also particularly grateful to those who have kept up their quarterly or monthly subscriptions with such wonderful regularity. We want our League's first business to be the fulfilment of its Object and Motto, which really means carrying the Christmas Spirit into all life's ways all the year round. But I do want our Violet Fund to be well maintained also, so that unitedly we may be able to do for other boys and girls what we have done for "Our Four"—Violet and David, Lena and Philip.

I referred last month to some of our members who have been telling me of their special "war work on the land."

This is a Scottish girl's letter:

I am very sorry for being so long in writing, but I have been very busy during the holidays. In the forenoons I helped mother with the housework, and then in the afternoons my sisters and I finished thinning the turnips. When they were finished we helped with the hay. I liked working in the hay better than thinning the turnips. I began the hayricks and built them until father was finished with the one he was building. Although I worked most of the time I enjoyed my holidays, and am sorry they are over. I have made up my mind to be an

M.A., and so when I get my Leaving Certificate I am going to the University. I am very pleased to be the first K— member, and I will try to get some "recruits."—Your interested Companion,
ELIZABETH.

I had another delightful letter from the Companion in the West Country who is doing a man's work as a railway-station clerk:

Thank you ever so much for your letter; it is kind of you to find time to write to me. How simply lovely our Pages have got! How anyone can express disapproval of our League I do not know, for I think it is a real step forward. The Companions who have been so busy with sales must feel proud when they know the results of their labours. I have been collecting seeds in my garden, but it is rather a tedious job, as I do not get much time off now, as we are one short at the station, so I have more to do. A little kitten walked into the station the other day, and as she would not go away we have adopted her, in the hope that she will keep the rats and mice down when she is bigger.

JEAN MORRIS (age 16; Lanarkshire) is a new Scottish friend who tells me she has

always been going to write to me, but we have been so busy these last two years that I always forgot. When my father gets *THE QUIVER* every month, he always says, "Well, lassie, I suppose you are wanting to read Alison's Corner." Isn't this just a dreadful time now? (writes Jean). We have all been busy making things for the soldiers. I am making little golliwogs and selling them for 1d., and I send parcels to lonely soldiers with my drawings. I think the new title is much nicer than the other. I am going to try hard to help the League.

DEAR ALISON (writes one of our recently joined members, MARGARET CUTMORE, age 12), I have not yet written to say what I think about the League. I think that it is splendid, and I count it an honour to belong to such a club. It will help us to prepare for higher positions in the future. If England is to be as high and noble as it has in the past, it means that we boys and girls will have to train ourselves for the great responsibility in store for us in the future. As you say, "We often hear it said that after the war things can never be the same again." It is our business to see that things are better than they have ever been. I think that God has been very good to us in keeping our shores free from invasion, and the least we can do out of gratitude to Him is to do our little duties faithfully and well, and to try to help and comfort the grown-ups who are so sad through this dreadful war. Your League will help us to do that.

I was pleased to hear again from JOHN BARTLE. He tells me of his interest in botany and his collection of wild flowers:

I have already collected 144 different specimens. Last year I collected 108 varieties and won the prize. It is the neatest book of wild flowers that wins the prize. After getting the flowers we press them, and then stick them in a book provided for us.

RUTH GELDART sends me a pleasant story of her holidays up in Eskdale, and adds:

I have just discovered that I have not said one word about the L.Y.B.C. I think it is so nice. I like the motto very much too. I have only just received my August magazine, as my godmother gives it me, and being away for my holidays I could not, of course, call for it. In our village it goes to at least three different houses after I have it, and sometimes it comes back with the cover very tattered indeed.

THE QUIVER

KATHLEEN PETERS is an old member who has filled in the new coupon.

I have been very much interested (she writes) in the article in THE QUIVER on the submerged forest, as I have seen it several times, and have somewhere in my possession a piece of marble which we once picked up there.

LEWIS OLDMEADOW (age 14; Shropshire), MR. HENRY DAVIES (age 34; London), and SHENA CORSAR (age 13; Forfarshire) are new members from whom I hope to receive long letters soon.

I have been sorry to hear of the death of two of our Companions—MISS MARY GRAY MURRAY, a Scottish member who took much interest in our work; and ARTHUR OWEN, a Welsh friend who had been ill for a long while. We give our sympathy to all their circles.

New coupons are coming in now faster from our far-away old members, and it gives me real pleasure to receive these new links, as I feel them to be, in our chain of friendship. "I am quite sure we shall all love our new League," writes EILEEN NELSON (Australia), in a letter covering her regular gift to the Fund. "It is that you mean us to have a wider outlook, is it not?" she rightly guesses, for her letter was written before she had seen our more recent chats.

ESSIE DALEY, another of our old Australian members, wrote appreciatively of our League:

It is now near the end of July, and we have not yet received the new June QUIVER. It does seem a long time coming. I shall watch with interest what all the old members have to say. It gave me much pleasure to know that Dr. Horton was on our Roll. We used to go and hear him preach when we stayed in Hampstead.

From Canada have come coupons, too, from our splendid helpers, KATHLEEN and DOROTHY COLLYER, who will, I hope, give their efforts to Lena, now that Violet is no longer a charge on the Fund.

KATHLEEN N. COOKE (Jamaica) sends not only her own coupon, but that of a new Companion, E. MURIEL HARVEY (age 14; Jamaica).

At first (wrote Kathleen) I did not quite like the idea of changing the name of our Corner, but after reading the Pages I thought it nice, so I am sending a coupon. I hope you won't change the badge, as they are so pretty and will remind us of Violet. I am sending the name of my cousin for the League.

As I am going to school I will be able to get some more Companions, so wish me luck.

JANIE CRAWFORD is an old Scottish Companion who has come into the enlarged circle.

I think the idea of the League is a splendid one (she wrote), and I do hope it will be a great success. I expect it will be a popular one. I am going to work at a Y.M.C.A. hut at ——— Hospital this winter.

ISABEL YOUNG paid me a call this summer, when she was in London, and I was interested to hear that she had been earning some money for our Fund by pea-picking in the fields in her home district.

Isn't it splendid to have such a Patron as the Lord Mayor of London? (she wrote when sending in her gift). I like the way Winifred Johnston writes of the new League. Wasn't E. Hibberd and W. Coleman's sale a splendid success? They must have worked hard and for a long time too.

But now I must shut up that Letter Box tight, or I shall have a lot more matter set than our Pages will take. I am hoping, as I write, that many of you are busy knitting for our little bairns, and that I shall have a big job in judging the vests sent in for the Competition.

Will you help me in a special way during the Christmas holidays? Will every Companion write and suggest some plan for helping our League to become something of the success we members all want it to be? And will you also each bring in *one* recruit as a New Year's present to it?

Every good wish
for you each and all
from

Your comrade,

Phoon.

"THE QUIVER" COMPANIONSHIP FUNDS

(July 1 to September 30, 1916)

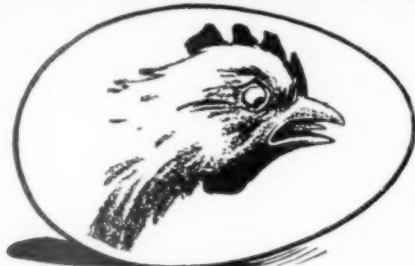
Brought forward, £7 7s. 7½d.; Winifred Johnston, 3s.; Dorothy Roberts, 1s.; Enid and Ida Jones, 5s.; Mary Jack, 2s.; Beryl Le Grice, 6d.; Dorothy Jean Best, 17s.; Mary Bulloch, 1s.; Blanche Oliver (Canada), 4s.; Isabel Dabson, 6s. 1d.; Heriot E. J. Hughes, 5s.; Hope Arken, 1s.; Dorothy Buckley, 5s.; Elsie Smith, Kitty Willers, Mary Offord, and Friends (Concert), £1 10s. 6d.; Kathleen Green, 1s.; Grayville Green, 1s.; Edith Penn (for Lena), 5s.; A. W. Knaggs, 2s. 6d.; Eileen Nelson (Australia), 7s. 6d.; Isabel Young (for Lena), 5s.; Nora Smith, 2s.

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"I'm awa' hame to get my FRY'S"

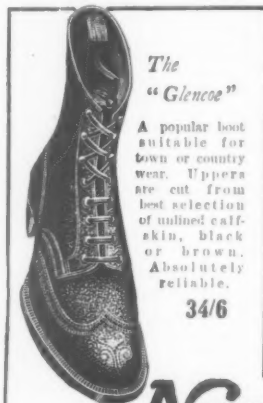


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The best proof of what Angier's Emulsion can do for you and your family is the evidence of what it has done for others. Here are a few selections from letters:—



Dyspepsia and Intestinal Ills.—I have been a great sufferer from dyspepsia and bowel trouble, and for five or six years was constantly under doctors' care. The last doctor told me my case was chronic and advised me to try Angier's Emulsion. I did so, and after five large bottles I feel quite cured. Have recommended it to many friends and shall continue to do so.—Francis O'Hara, 77 Bentinck Street, Farnworth.

Tonic.—For my little girl's cough I have found Angier's Emulsion most efficacious. It also acted as a wonderful tonic, bracing up the entire system.—Mrs. F. Foshwaite, Cleve View, Holly Hall, Dudley.

A Doctor's Son.—I am pleased to say that Angier's Emulsion has had a very beneficial effect upon my little boy, who has taken it now for some time. Constipation is quite relieved, also the abdominal distension, which was rather marked. Appetite and general condition are also much improved. The effect has been so decided that I am glad to give you this testimony, which you may use if you wish.—M.B., B.S., F.R.C.S.

Bronchial Affections.—A Clergyman writes: I am subject to bronchial affections and my remedy nearly always is Angier's Emulsion. It is the best of all remedies that I have tried.—Rev. D. Rees, The Maise, Newton, Mumbles.

Constipation.—To me Angier's Emulsion is excellent for the digestion and against constipation.—J. Gregory Smith, M.A., Hon. LL.D., etc., The Howdah, Horsell, Woking.

Cream-like and Pleasant.—A Clergyman writes: I always tell people that if they like cream they will like Angier's Emulsion. It is not only excellent for coughs and colds, but its general action on the bodily system is most beneficial. It is a mild tonic as well as a curative medicine. For many years I have constantly recommended Angier's Emulsion to my friends and parishioners—to their invaluable benefit.—Rev. W. G. Cruft, Naseley Vicarage, Rugby.

Building up.—A Clergyman writes: We always have Angier's Emulsion in the house ready for use when our two little girls have colds or need a little building up. I have given it to weakly children in the village and the result has always been beneficial.—Rev. Walter F. Turner, The Vicarage, Fridaythorpe, Malton.

Gastric Catarrh.—I have suffered for years with gastric catarrh, chronic indigestion, and constipation. Angier's Emulsion has answered in my case where other medicine has failed, and I feel very grateful for the good it has done me.—Lilian Wood, 3 Princess Road, Edgbaston, Birmingham.

Severe Colds.—A Clergyman writes: My wife and I and our little boy have had severe colds, but quickly recovered through taking Angier's Emulsion. We have found it most effectual. We shall ever keep a bottle handy.—Rev. A. H. Field, The Manse, Benenden, Kent.

A Blessing in the House.—A Clergyman writes: Angier's Emulsion has been a boon and a blessing in my home for several years.—Rev. H. Marsden, 132 Keighley Road, Colne.

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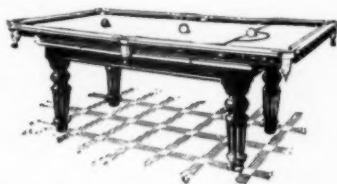
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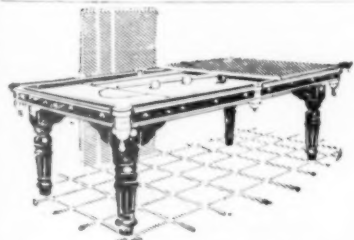
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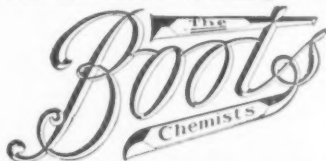


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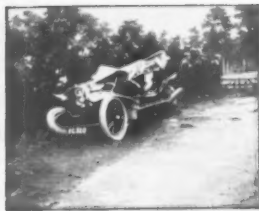


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